

IPPS

Sharing Plant Production Knowledge Globally

the Propagator



International Plant Propagators
Society (IPPS) Australia

International Plant Propagators' Society www.ipps.org.au
Australian Region - Newsletter Spring 2012 - No: 35

International Scene Propagation Guide in GB&I

Spencer Gunn (editor for IPPS GB&I Region) has put together the following news about a new propagation guide they are assisting HDC with.

HDC is the R&D organisation for horticulture in the UK and it is funded through a statutory levy on growers. There's no government matched funding. It covers all of the ornamentals, fruit and veg industry.

I am sure that a few of our members will be wondering how they could get a copy of this, or if we could do something like it with NGIA for Australia.

IPPS members contribute to new propagation guide

Members of IPPS GB&I Region have helped the Horticultural Development Company (HDC) by sharing their plant propagation expertise to provide information for HDC's new propagation guide – which will be launched on September 26 at GB&I's annual conference at East Malling, Kent.

"There has been a lot of research on propagation and liner production over the last 25 years, much of it funded by HDC," said the guide's author, ADAS nursery adviser Andrew Hewson. "But growers who want to use the results have found them widely scattered across numerous individual reports that are not always readily accessible.

"On top of that, there is also a wealth of information from other sources, most notably IPPS. Growers on HDC's Hardy Nursery Stock Panel felt it would be valuable to bring all of this information together – reviewed, edited and collated into a single, practical guide to industry knowledge and best practice."

Right from the start, the widest possible input of industry expertise was seen as a central part of the project, says Hewson. A steering group of growers, consultants and researchers has guided the structure and content of the publication.

Seed experts Dennis Fordham and Philip McMillan Browse helped draft

the information on seed propagation; top grafters Chris Lane and Nick Dunn dealt with grafting and chip budding; and Neal Wright shaped content on micropropagation.

Brian Humphrey, one of the founders of the GB&I region, has



IPPS GB&I Vice President David Talbot with a draft of the propagation guide

THIS EDITION

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Problem Solving
Ross Hall 1950-2012

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also shared his wealth of knowledge, notably on Camellia and Pieris propagation. Information based on the pioneering research of the late Margaret Scott at the former Efford Experimental Horticulture Station – on subjects such as stock plant management, rooting media, nutrition and rooting hormones – and that of East Malling’s Richard Harrison-Murray on propagation environments and Brian Howard on grafting and chip budding features prominently.

Four of the sections of the guide cover propagation management, techniques, environments and systems and aftercare. A fifth includes case studies and ‘top tips’ from IPPS members. The publication is completed with a troubleshooting guide to common propagation problems and references to sources of further information.

The six grower case studies – many are nurseries owned or staffed by IPPS members – cover propagation planning and how to develop a propagation unit; practical aspects of micropropagation; improving control of rooting environments; and crop protection by IPM. These are all examples of good practice and illustrate how research has been applied for commercial advantage, for example to reduce propagation losses, improve quality and raise productivity.

“Producing the guide has also helped us to identify a number of gaps in the industry’s propagation knowledge requiring either further research or work to get existing information out to growers,” said Andrew. These include nutrition of stock plants and cuttings; use of cold storage; detailed recommendations for rooting hormone use; and how to improve labour efficiency and crop protection.

The guide will only be free to all HDC levy-paying nurseries in the United Kingdom. There is more information on www.hdc.org.uk



President’s Comment

A warm, spring hello to all members,

Whilst the Toowoomba conference is now a past memory, the administration tidy up has just been

completed & with welcome relief, the financial result for the Society was a positive. Congratulations to the organising committee for keeping a tight rein on the budget. Now is the time to start looking forward to our May 2013 Conference, a joint conference with the NGIV.

After a false start due to a clash with a large air show in the local district in September, the next opportunity to mingle with your IPPS friends & guests will be Saturday 10th November. David & Alex Cliffe supported by local members have organised a 1 day IPPS workshop at Narromine Transplants. We would greatly appreciate your support so please pencil into your diary a fun but interesting weekend in Narromine in November.

As Awards Committee Chairman, the annual hunt for nominations for our awards begins once again. Updated information will soon be on the IPPS website for next year’s awards. We have worthy recipients ‘hiding’ amongst our ranks & all they may need is a little encouragement to participate. The executive members can help so please forward contact details for any potential candidates to me for follow up.

It was with great felt sadness to hear of the death of Ross Hall. Sincere thanks goes to Bruce Higgs & David Daly for their tribute within this newsletter. He was an IPPS icon in the 90’s before his retirement. I have great fun time memories of Ross & Anita Boucher from the IPPS International Conference held in Melbourne in the mid 90’s.

Do hope Spring ‘12 delivers some sunny, warm ‘growing’ weather & brings back some positive optimism for our industry.

Peter Lewis

IPPS Australian Region Board for 2012 - 2013

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Executive Officer's Report

IPPS Office

Even though the IPPS Office slows down at this time of the year, I have still been kept busy winding up final reports/outcome from the Toowoomba conference. Once again another fabulous conference. We were back to a Regional Conference this year so it was 'back to basics'. Even though we didn't have all the 'bells n whistles' as seen in past conferences, everyone still had a good time.

Combined Proceedings

International Board have advised they are on target and all Members will receive their combined proceedings Vol. 60 shortly.



MELBOURNE CONFERENCE 2013

JOINT WITH NGIV

15th to 19th May 2013

'Horticulture My Business My Passion'

Next years conference will be held at the SEBEL HOTEL in Albert Park

Make a note of this date in your diary.

Subscriptions

Maintaining membership is still a challenge as membership has

declined over the past year. The Australian Region of IPPS currently has 232 members. There were 5 new members who joined at the Toowoomba conference and another 3 have since joined after the conference.

Pam Berryman

2013 South African Exchange

We are looking for another young person to go to the South African region and spend about three weeks with some local nurseries and attend the Conference next March, 2013. This should be a special opportunity as this will be an International Conference with speakers from across the globe.

This really is a fabulous opportunity to not only see how other people do things at their workplace in another country but to also spend time socialising with the local people and experience the culture. Of course there will be a little time for you to look around the sights. Applications close at the end of December so get one in soon.

The program as usual is sponsored by Australia and South Africa IPPS. After the trip the chosen propagator will be expected to attend the Australian IPPS Conference in MELBOURNE, VIC from 15th to 19th May 2013 to talk about their wonderful experience.

Now that you are thinking about this or you know someone who may be suitable, check the following to make sure of eligibility:-

- You must be over the age of 18 and just starting your career of propagating and growing plants.
- You must be able to travel to South Africa in March 2013 and attend our 2013 Conference.



- Your employer must support this application and your time off work.
- You must be prepared to make notes and take photographs of your great experience and report back to the Australian IPPS Conference.

If all of the above suits you and you would like to be hosted in South Africa (at no cost to you, except spending money) and gain from the experience of South Africa. Then send in the application form which is available on the IPPS [website](http://www.ipps.org.au) www.ipps.org.au .

If you think a member of your staff should attend then suggest that they apply. For further information please contact Peter Lewis or Pam Berryman.

Anne Willcock from South Australia really enjoyed the experience this year in South Africa. Here she is taking in the view over Hout Bay Cape Town.

"The IPPS, nationally and internationally, has been a great resource and I hope we can continue to learn a lot from each other"



FIELD DAY AT NARROMINE

Narromine Transplants will be opening their doors to IPPS members on **SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10th** 2012. This open day will be preceded by an Australian Region board meeting on the Friday afternoon and a get together for dinner on that night for those that want to meet up with other members.

Directions: 120 Eumungerie Road, Narromine, 2821 - you will find us on Google maps, just type in Narromine Transplants

An initial programme is as follows:

- Friday November 9th – Australian Region IPPS Board meeting commencing 1.00pm
Dinner at a local hotel or club TBA, at own cost
- Saturday November 10th – Open day at Narromine Transplants commences 10.00am,
Lunch at 12.30pm provided by Narromine Transplants
2.00 pm more demonstrations and some talks on pesticides, irrigation etc.
4.00 pm drinks
7.00 pm Dinner at a local hotel or club TBA, at own cost

There will be **demonstrations on mixes, seeding, germination, machine transplanting, grafting budding and cutting production as well as talks on pesticide selection, application and safety.** Michael Danelon, NSW Industry Development Manager will also run a short **workshop on irrigation management and calibration.**

Please advise us if you are thinking of coming:

David Cliffe: email david@transplants.com.au Ph: 0427253165

Alex Cliffe: email alex@transplants.com.au Ph: 0417465531

Accommodation available in Narromine:

The Stockman Motor Inn – 02 6889 2033
stockmaninn@bigpond.com

Peppercorn Motor Inn – 02 6889 1399
www.peppercornmotorinn.com.au

The Imperial Stay – 02 6889 7800

Narromine Hotel Motel – 02 6889 1017

Abbey B&B – 02 6889 2213 www.theabbeybb.com.au

Narromine Tourist Park (cabins) – 02 6889 2129
www.narrominetouristpark.com.au

Problem Solving

Have you ever had a problem at work or in your life that really tested you or your work team, and how did you go about resolving it? At the Toowoomba conference Steve Newmarch shared his experience and this has prompted some discussions with fellow nurserymen such as John Teulon and Michael Gleeson leading to this article. In a previous career I worked in a manufacturing company and was a trained Quality Improvement program manager and team facilitator.

So often in the past one of my staff would come to me to report on their activities and any issues or projects they were working on. Often I found that these highly trained people were reacting to pressure from others or were jumping to solutions that in reality were only treating the symptoms of a problem and not the cause. It is an easy trap to fall into; you might see some plants not performing well and give them a

tonic rather than investigate and gather data to find the cause.

It is all to do with our training. Many of us have been through courses where you are challenged to think critically about a topic, or are given problems with a few relevant bits of data. There are few courses available in our educational system on real world problem solving techniques. Leading on from the Quality guru W.E. Deming the Japanese perfected systems to critically analyse what they were doing and identify causes of problems. You can see this everyday in the reliability and design of Japanese cars. A great reference for many techniques is the "Guide to Quality Control" by Kaoru Ishikawa which includes the 7 Basic QI Tools - 80% of problems can be solved with a checklist, Pareto Chart and Cause and Effect diagram.

- Checklist: Enables you to gather data about an event or issue. It asks the What happens, Who does it/is responsible, Where it occurs,

When it happens & how often, and How it happens. Used to identify problems and improvement opportunities.

- Pareto Chart: Used to identify major factors contributing to the subject being analysed.
- Cause and Effect Diagram (my Root Cause Tree) - the Why.
- Graph Histogram
- Scatter Diagram
- Control Chart

The main problem we all have with dealing with problems at work or elsewhere are that they are often complex and we just can not process all the information easily in our brains. We can easily remember 7 numbers but when phone numbers went to eight digits we had to learn to process them in packets by remembering the area code and number and something that associated them. I know people are amazed out how we can remember

botanical names, but for me it is about knowing bits of the Latin bases or for who the plant was named after.

A cause and effect diagram is a simple tool to use but it works with just about any problem. I have modified the usual cause and effect diagram for the horticultural industry and called it a "Root Cause Tree". The rules however are the same:

- Draw the diagram on some butchers paper or board.
- Write the problem statement at the base making sure it includes the "effect".
- Determine the major categories that relate to the effect.

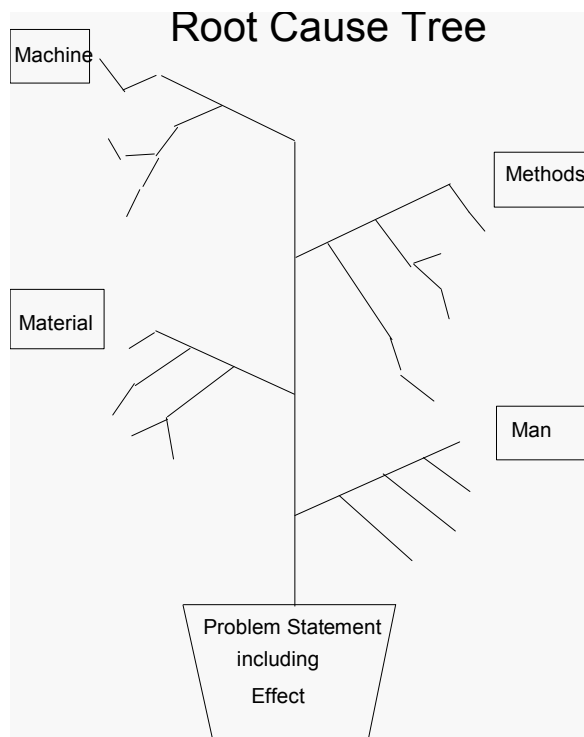
Some useful generic categories are; Man (people), Methods (procedures), Machine (equipment), Material, Environment. If you are working with a process break it down into its major activities using a flowchart, then assign each activity as a major branch. A team could brainstorm possible causes, and segment these into categories.

Once the tree is set up with major categories, begin with the major category the team identified as the most likely to produce an actionable root cause near the base and ask **why**.

- Why does this occur?
- Why does this condition exist?

Keep asking **why** and write the answer on the tree until you cannot logically go further creating branches. Repeat the process for each identified cause branch. Then circle the root causes on your paper.

As an example if the problem was "late deliveries leading to customer dissatisfaction", then one cause under the man (Driver) category branch could be "did not leave nursery on time". Asking why to this may lead to "order not ready for shipment". Asking why again may lead to "shipping lead time



inadequate". Then finally we may arrive at "holdups and errors in paperwork in picking". So instead of abusing the driver we can seek a solution to fixing the paperwork so orders are picked correctly and on time.

Of course the thing we should have done once arriving at the two or three root causes is spend some time verifying that they were causes of the effect. There are then various systematic approaches to selecting which solutions to work on first.

How often have you had a problem at work and called a group together to brainstorm it and found the result was not what you expected. Mostly this has to do with us and group dynamics. Many would have had their own agenda and some may have pushed it more forcefully than others to "win the day but not the war". So how do you get around this?

When brainstorming issues there are a few things that need to be put into place as rules and it is important that everyone sticks to them. Often managers are seen to treat problems as a personal failure that staff may want to hide. The simple way around this is to depersonalise it and treat issues as "system failures" that need to be addressed.

This may result in many changes in your organisation.

Then so that everyone has an input appoint a group leader and in turn go around the group clockwise allowing everyone to have an input and respecting what they have to say (and no one is to criticise others opinions) even if they "pass" when it comes to their turn.

I would encourage you to try this next time you are brainstorming an issue in a group.

Some other systems that you may find useful to explore for your workplace that are used by Japanese and many other organisations around the world are:

Kaizen: a process of improvement used by companies like Toyota as well as many firms in a variety of business spheres.

PDCA cycle: (Plan, Do, Check, and Act) most Australians spend less than 10% of the time in a new task planning it, whereas in Japan this can be over 30% so that mistakes are minimised.

Kanban: a simple means of implementing a Just in Time (JIT) system to reduce inventories of consumerables e.g. labels and pots in nurseries.

5 Whys: another problem solving technique.

Mottainai: regret of wasted effort, resources.

Muda: meaning waste, and simply this approach classifies activities as either adding value or not. Actions are then put into place to improve the former and eliminate the latter. The approach does not focus on process redesign.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to know more about any aspect of this and how to go about applying it in your workplace. I encourage you to try this simple problem solving technique next time you have a problem.

Bruce Higgs

BOOK SALE

The 4th edition of this key reference for propagators and growers builds on our understanding of horticultural practices.

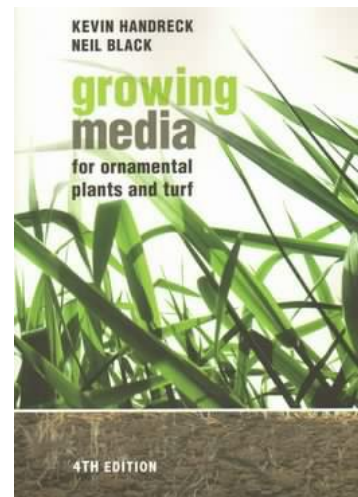
It includes new material which helps us to minimise or eliminate the pollution of surface and underground waters with nutrients. This is among other changes which address environmental concerns to the nursery industry.

Originally published at \$79.95, Gil Teague at Florilegium has copies available at **\$29.95**.

Available through
www.florilegium.com.au

email sales@florilegium.com.au,

phone 02 9571 8222 or call at the shop 65 Derwent St, Glebe, NSW.



Rod Tallis Award

It is that time of year again when our young horticulturists need to be nudged and encouraged to apply for this prestigious award.

It is not too late to undertake some short duration project or research that could see some worthy propagator at the start of their career gain an award that they can be proud of and mark the start of a successful career in horticulture.

Past editions of "the propagator" may give some ideas for projects, and help is available if you are unsure about designing an experiment.

All that needs to be done is do the work and submit an application. Contact details for Peter Lewis are on the IPPS website at www.ipps.org.au. Don't delay, or you will miss this great opportunity.

Six Pack Sponsored by Yates and IPPS

IPPS Australia offers the opportunity for 6 young propagators to come to the 2013 IPPS Melbourne conference (15th to 19th May 2013), for no charge! The closing date for applications is Friday 15th March 2013.

If you have a passion for horticulture and would like to meet the best in the field, and learn plenty at the same time, then this is for you. In return for conference registration, accommodation and travel assistance, we ask that you support the conference organisers to make the event run as smoothly as possible... a fairly enjoyable task.

To be a candidate for the Melbourne 6 Pack you must be under 30 years of age, be nominated by your employer by completion of the Nomination Form and by completing the candidate information sheet available on the website at www.ipps.org.au



2012 Toowoomba 6 Pack really helped make the conference special for everyone

Ross Hall (1950-2012)

Ross Hall was passionate in his support of IPPS and will be sadly missed. He joined the society in 1980 and not only was conference organiser for the 1996 Melbourne conference but was a past director and President (1997), International Director, and Award of Honor recipient in 2002. For a few years in the mid 2000's he served as editor for the Australian region.

Ross attended most IPPS Australian Region conferences until recently, and had also participated in many Area meetings. He presented papers at many conferences, both here and overseas. Ross also attended IPPS conferences in Canada in 1997, Denmark in 1998 and in the USA in 1999.

It is however his lasting impact on horticulture that Ross will primarily be remembered by colleagues in the industry.

Ross Hall ably embodied our motto – to seek and to share. Ross had much to share, and I appreciated our conversations over recent years. This tribute has extensively used material obtained by a friend and past student David Daly from his friends from Burnley Greg Moore and John Rayner.

In 1968 Ross gained his first horticultural employment at the University of Melbourne's Mt. Derrimut Research station in 1970. Later he went on to work at the Plant Research Institute at Burnley from 1973 to February, 1975. In 1974 Ross married Geraldine, and they had three children – Dan, Nick and Katie who have all achieved success.

The experience of working with plants at the Plant Research Institute led Ross into full-time studies in Horticulture at Burnley Horticultural College from 1975 to 1977, graduating with a Diploma in Horticultural Science. Ross's friends at College



recall his quick wit, dry sense of humour, the late nights on sojourns, his love of skiing and of course rowing on the Yarra.

He excelled in his studies at Burnley; especially in nursery production and floriculture in which he won the E.H. Wragg and G.W. Peart Memorial prizes in 1976 and 1977 respectively.

Greg Moore wrote that he “was always a plants person and was Burnley through and through. He graduated with his Dip Hort Science in 1977. Ross was interested and excelled in soil science and plant propagation at the College and so was targeted, even as a student, for a future teaching role at Burnley.” In 1979 after a couple of years of relevant industry experience he joined the staff.

However, Ross was part of the group of the then “young guns” who revolutionized the curriculum. In 1986 he graduated with a Master of Environmental Science degree from Monash University on “control burns and their effects on soils, particularly nitrogen”. He was promoted to a Lecturer in 1987 and became a Senior Lecturer in 1993.

His passion for soils, nursery production and later environmental

sustainability meant that for over a quarter of a century he made sure these aspects of curriculum were preserved, made relevant and served the needs of Victorian industry and society. Few people influence generations of young people and leave a lasting legacy for their community as Ross has.

Burnley students have always been known for two things above all – knowing their plants and knowing how to grow them. For over a quarter of a century Ross made sure that knowing how to grow plants remained a priority. This commitment was widely acknowledged by the Nursery Industry Association.

Ross was a product of Melbourne's west, and supported the Doggies and rowed for Footscray. Like many, who have every reason not to be modest, Ross was very modest about his achievements. He did not boast of his professional successes or of the many industry awards.

Few knew he had been a champion rower. He competed in the 2002 World Master Games as a rower in the eights. They didn't win but he said the New Zealanders were magnificent rowers and built like brick outhouses, apparently unaware that he could be described in the same terms – tall, great build, broad shoulders, never give up attitude.

Ross was a very fine horticulturist in the very best of the Burnley tradition. He stepped up to a challenge and was prepared to run with it. He had a wonderful and productive professional career and achieved the professional goals to which he aspired as a young man.

Sadly the IPPS membership are farewelling him at too early an age. His contributions to horticulture should inspire many over the coming years.

News

2014 New Zealand Joint IPPS Conference

'We had our first meeting last week and have booked the Conference venue – "Macs Brewbar Function Centre". Unfortunately there is no accommodation attached to this venue, but the Museum Hotel is just down the road. The venue, for those who have a rough guide on Wellington is beside Te Papa Museum and on the waterfront. We have pencilled in rooms at the Museum Hotel.

Our theme is "**Lights, Camera, Action**".

We are organising a Pre Conference tour which will head to New Plymouth and maybe back through the Wairarapa. At this stage it is planned to leave on the Friday or Saturday before Conference. The Conference dates are set at the 8th to 11th May.

Will be keeping in touch, so please let me know if I can answer any queries. We would love some Aussie Speakers, but we would love where possible that the theme be considered e.g. Lighting is important in growing etc. !!.

Glenys Evans

IPPS NZ

Challenge

My original intention for writing this column was to offer our membership some plant propagation challenges. Over the last few editions I have wondered off a bit from this idea and would like to get back to my original intention.

Over the last few weeks I have been challenged myself about what to write, I even had a long discussion with our esteemed editor Bruce but to no avail. Not being an active plant propagator these days does not leave me with enough inspiration.

So here is my challenge to you our membership. Do any of you have a challenging plant Propagation Issue? Is there a plant that you struggle to propagate? I bet there is, so please get in touch and let me know. What better place to find a group of willing "Seekers and Sharers" than in this great society we are all members of.

So contact me by Email on clynservices@bigpond.com.au or phone me at **02 96274430** and yes I also have a cell phone 0419604461.

Michael Gleeson

As a suggestion you might like to research the use of compost teas and a simple start can be found at:

<http://permaculture.org.au/2012/07/11/compost-teas-and-extracts-brewin-and-bubblin-basics>

Newsletter Editors Comment

There are opportunities for us to share our knowledge of propagation with others like the guide being produced in Great Britain. I hope the article on problem solving assists you in your career.

We have some special things lined up this year. Please let David Cliffe know if you are going to the open day at Narromine transplants.

Join up the Australian facebook site and start contributing by "liking" it. You will find links to new plant varieties, green roofs, and testing of plants for salt tolerance by Ozbreed. As well as news from around the society.

The IPPS LinkedIn site has many discussions going and propagation questions being answered from members around the world. So why not join in and be a part of this.

Don't forget that this newsletter and some past copies are also available on the IPPS website at www.ipps.org.au, and pass your extra copy of the newsletter around at work.

Bruce Higgs - editor
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bruce.higgs@bigpond.com

IPPS CALENDAR

Region	Dates	Site
2012		
Japan Region	October 20-25	Pre-conf. Tour
2012 International Tour and Meeting held with Regional conference	October 27-28	Hamamatsu, Japan
Eastern Region, North American	October 10-13	Brandywine Valley, PA
Southern Region	October 13-16	Auburn, Alabama
2013		
Southern African Region	February 25 - March 3	Tour, Gauteng
2013 International Tour and Meeting held with Regional conference	March 4 -7	Cape Town
New Zealand Region	April 25-28	Taupo, North Island
Australian Region	May 15 - 19	Melbourne, Victoria