

Propagation notes on *Coprosma wallii*, *Coprosma pedicellata* and *Olearia gardneri*

Robyn Smith¹

COPROSMA WALLII

Seed from Koromiko Farm in the Wairarapa was collected by Garry Foster (Department of Conservation) on 12 February 1998 and couriered to me. Upon my receipt the seed was thoroughly cleaned which is a time consuming process but extremely important. The seed was then mixed with moist peat and stratified in an ordinary fridge. In storage the bags were opened once every week to check moisture levels and to aerate the contents.

Although I had previously been advised by Jorge Santos (Motukarara Nursery, Department of Conservation) to store it for 5 months, I discovered when doing the weekly aeration of the seed that it was starting to germinate in the fridge.

The seed was sown on the 28 June 1998 on commercial seed raising mix topped with sand (to help fungus gnats from laying their eggs on the mix). Germination was rapid and started on the 16 July 1998 and carried on for several weeks. This years germination of *Coprosma wallii* resulted in 270 plants.

COPROSMA PEDICELLATA

Seed was collected by Garry Foster and Tony Silbery from Admiral Station, Wairarapa on 14 and 28 March 1998 and went through the same process as *Coprosma wallii*. It was cleaned, then stratified in the fridge on 22 April 1998. It was then sown on 11 August 1998. The seed started to germinate on 7 October with germination spread over 12 weeks. Germination rates were very high for both *Coprosma* species although the seed was not counted. Germination for *C. pedicellata* produced 160 plants.

OLEARIA GARDNERI

This species is more difficult to raise from seed than the above species of coprosma. Seed sourced from Koromiko Farm was received from Garry Foster on 20 December 1997 and sown upon arrival onto five trays of seed raising mix. A small proportion was sown onto coarse sand with potting mix underneath. Germination commenced on 29 December 1997 and was spread

1 Titahi Bay, Porirua

over six weeks. Only 30 seedlings germinated and they were limited to one tray (fig. 1). None of the seed sown onto sand germinated. I guess that the seed that did germinate all came from one branch or one tree. Springhill Station seed arrived the same day and was sown onto two trays but did not germinate at all.

Looking through Percy Reserves propagation records, the success rate appears to be around the average germination rate for *Olearia gardneri* sown in the past. Germination stated nine days after sowing and continued for four weeks, however the majority of plants germinated within a week.

Growing *Olearia gardneri* by cuttings has also been trailed in the Wairarapa and at Percys reserve with good results. According to Colin Ogle, tip cuttings in spring produce the best results.

It is important to note that all three species are palatable to slugs, particularly *Coprosma pedicellata* and therefore a regular preventative application of slug bait is essential.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jorge Santos, Motukarara Nursery (Department of Conservation)
Colin Ogle, personal communication.

REFERENCES

Eagle, A. 1982. Eagles Trees and Shrubs of New Zealand Volumes 1 and 2.
Metcalf, L. 1997. The Propagation of New Zealand native plants.



Fig. 1. *Olearia gardneri* seedling.
Photo: Tony Silbery.