Byblis gigantea

by
Bruce Pierson
P.O. Box 179, Albion Park, N.S.W. 2527, Australia

Most failures of this species in cultivation seem to be caused by keeping the compost too wet. By using the following method of cultivation, you should be able to grow this species very successfully. Use a 150 mm plastic pot, and line the drain holes with sphagnum moss. This acts as an indicator, while retaining the potting medium, which should be 2 parts river or horticultural sand, and 1 part peat.

The plant can be planted in this mixture, and the pot watered by placing it into 25 mm of water for about ½ hour. Then remove the pot and place it on the bench. By watching the sphagnum moss, you will know when to re-water the pot. As the pot becomes drier, the moss will get lighter, but don't allow the pot to become too dry, as the plant may become water stressed. Place the pot back into the water as necessary, always removing it to drain after about ½ hour.

On reaching maturity, the plant will flower, and if you wish to collect the seed, the flowers will need to be cross-pollinated. Using a small brush, collect the pollen from one flower, by tapping the anthers in order to make them release their pollen, which is collected from the petals, and transferred to the stigma of *another* flower, whose pollen may be used on the first flower. Seed is exceptionally difficult to germinate, but some success will be achieved by placing the seed in a container, and pouring boiling water on it, and allowing it to soak overnight before sowing on the same medium as for the parent plant, moist only.



Byblis gigantea
Photo by J. Mazrimas.

At the end of the growing season, this species will start to die down, at which time, the pot should be allowed to dry out completely. At the start of winter, the pot should be re-watered by using the above method, taking care not to allow the potting medium to become soggy at any time, which may result in the death of the plant. Watering may be necessary every day in hot weather, while in cooler weather, every few days may be adequate.

REMINDER: Changes of address should be sent to Pat Hansen, 3321 Hamell Road, Fullerton, CA 92635. No further issues of *CPN* will be mailed to people whose copies are returned by the post office until a change of address is received.