

**B**OOTH of the Snotty-gobbles, *Persoonia elliptica* and *P. longifolia*, are extremely attractive small trees well worth attempting to re-establish in bushland, and even in gardens. However, they have proved difficult to grow. A successful method of propagation is outlined below, based on the experience of a lower south-west plant propagator.

The best cutting material is obtained from young suckers in the autumn after a spring burn. Plant material can be collected along roadsides where grading has been carried out. The mechanical damage to the roots caused by grading, together with the impact of the fire, seems to stimulate sucker development.

A collecting licence from CALM will be needed, and permission to take material must be obtained from the land manager - CALM for forest roads, MR for main roads, the Shire Council for local roads.

- ◆ The best time to take cuttings is about Easter, after the first rains.
- ◆ The best material is a shoot from 10 to 15 cm long, semi-soft, with a white to pink colouring at the base of the sucker. If the cutting is too soft the cutting

## PRACTICALITIES

### A method for propagating Snottygobble

*Jenny Dewing*



will wilt. If possible, it is better to get a bit of heel with the cutting material. Always leave some suckers attached to the parent plant to grow on.

- ◆ Transfer the cutting to a bucket of water immediately. Trim the

rough edges from the base and reduce the leaf area to about one third. Soak the cuttings in Maxicrop or another vitamin source and rooting promotant. This keeps the cuttings in good condition while they are rooting.

- ◆ Dip the cutting in rooting hormone powder. Advanced cuttings with a bit of bark material can be slit to allow the rooting hormone to contact the plant material.
- ◆ Put the cuttings into tubes filled with coarse white river sand.

Bottom heat of around 26°C will assist root development, as will misting.

Roots take four weeks to several months to develop. Once the roots have reached to bottom of the pot, transfer the cuttings into larger pots of 12-15 cm diameter. Transplants respond well to deeper tubes or root training pots. Osmacote can be added to the potting mix.

These cuttings will be ready for planting out in spring or early in the next season.

*Jenny Dewing is LFW Officer at Bridgetown. She can be contacted on 9761 2318.*