

# Caudiciform Corner

For lovers of the stately and sculpturesque

## Some tylecodons

The genus *Tylecodon* (an anagram of *Cotyledon*) was constructed fairly recently from those species of *Cotyledon* which are caudiciform and shed their leaves. Two of the more commonly seen species are *T. wallichii* and *T. paniculata*. Both come from the western winter rainfall succulent areas of Southern Africa and are widespread and common in habitat. Large *T. paniculata* can reach 2m in height and be 1m in circumference at ground level. *T. wallichii* is found as a multibranched shrub with 30-40mm thick branches covered by the stiff, spine-like remains of old leaf stems. Both species are often found together and offer rare shade for other smaller succulents like *crassulas* and *adromischus*.

Being strict winter growers, both species need to be given a dry spell during summer. No harm will be done if some water is given accidentally during summer but there is no need for any, especially with larger plants. Both species can survive outdoors here in southern Victoria but hard frosts and occasional wet summers will most likely eventually kill them.

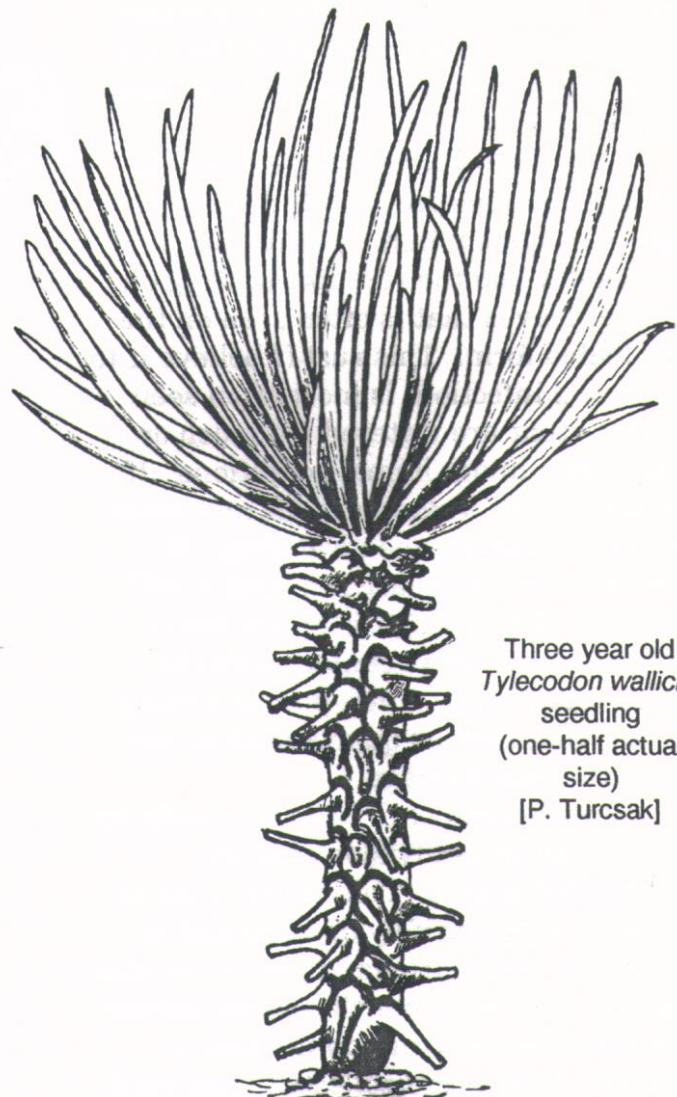
Both species are best grown as seedlings but both can be grown from cuttings. If grown under shade, the leaves of both species will be long and strap-like, very different from the stiff and thick leaves of sun grown plants. Shade grown plants of *T. paniculata* will also be thin in the stem and prone to snapping off in mid stem when they become top heavy with new leaves. The leaf canopy of *T. paniculata* is particularly heavy when the leaves are full sized and

can lead to plants toppling over.

Potting mixes are not critical. Soil based mixes can be used to good effect as these eliminate the need for fertilizers and give a stockier growth than plants grown in soil-less mixes.

Watering can begin when the first signs of new growth is seen, usually at the end of March or early April. Watering can be heavy and dunking can be used to thoroughly soak the dry rootball. Within a matter of weeks the plant is in full leaf.

Problems in growing tylecodons are seen in collections kept in closed green-



Three year old  
*Tylecodon wallichii*  
seedling  
(one-half actual  
size)  
[P. Turcsak]