

PROPAGATION OF *DRACAENA MARGINATA* BY HEADS

ADRIAN HICKS

Hicks Brothers Nursery
Southport, Gold Coast, Queensland

Dracaena marginata is easy to propagate from large stems taken from established trees by placing them in double washed river sand in a 3 gal tub under shade and watering once a day for a period of 10 to 12 weeks. However, not only does this method ruin your tree but if done in the winter, between April and September, will kill it. Also there is very little of this mature stock around.

My method is to peel off 8 to 12 leaves from the centre of the head, leaving 10 to 12 leaves below the bared stem section. This leaves a nice, bushy head with mature wide leaves. This is left alone for several weeks until the bark has hardened like the mature wood on the bottom.

The heads are then cut off with a small saw and 5 or 6 are placed in a bucket with a small layer of sphagnum moss for 24 hours until the sap has dried out. The leaves are watered a couple of times to stop dehydration.

The heads are then planted in double washed river sand in a 1 or 2-gal bucket. After 5 to 6 weeks in a bush-house or in shade they will have struck roots. I came to the conclusion that the softness of the outer bark and the sap had killed my previous heads.

A few weeks after cutting the heads from the parent tree I had 2 or 3 nice new heads sprouting for next year, whereas by taking the whole branch near the base I was cutting off my stock for next year. This way I end up with a nice shaped stock plant which, if it is in the ground, can be dug and potted after 7 or 8 years, sold for a good profit and replaced with a smaller tree.

SUMMER GRAFTING OF GOLDEN ROBINIA

GRAHAM PARR

Kenthurst, New South Wales

Robinia pseudoacacia 'Frisia' (golden robinia) is a small to medium, fast-growing, deciduous tree of the Leguminosae family. It has golden-yellow leaves from spring to autumn and white wisteria-like flowers in spring.