



Transcription details:

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Transcription results:

My name is Brian Fitzpatrick and we're in Batlow in the Snowy Mountains. I'm the owner and manager of Waratah Australis. It's a mixed nursery and Waratah breeding specialist. I've been breeding Waratahs for over 20 years. That's probably the most magnificent flowers. If you haven't seen one, you've come across one in the wild. They're this luminous red flowers. After a bush fire they'll come back and just get this glowing embers of red in the bush.

The actual process of breeding is quite a long process before it gets actually to the home garden or to the florist. It starts with the hand pollinating of flowers to create new varieties. The pollination stage to the flowering of your first plant can take four years. From selecting that variety once it's flowered can take another ten years before it's commercialized and on the market. This season, I'll distribute maybe 15,000 cuttings to growers in New South Wales and South Australia, and they grow them on and then they sell them into stores such as Bunnings.

Our latest variety is to be released nationally this year and it's a new compact variety. It's taken me probably 15 years to develop. So it's a long process and a long time before returns, but it's been satisfying and you keep the passion going for as long as you can.

In the course of developing the farm I decided to have an open day to showcase what I've been doing on the farm, and so we had some music and wine and food and we had some people demonstrating how to graft. I gave a guided tour of the place and a bit of history of the Waratah development and what I was doing here. It turned into quite a nice day, so I've been asked by the locals to do it again, so we're having it again this year. I have in mind to develop the place for maybe having events, music events, weddings maybe in the future, with the idea to have a gallery and a studio on the property within the next couple of years to maybe showcase more events.

I love the work I do because I'm working with Australian flora, particularly Waratahs, and I'm working outdoors. I enjoy it and I'm doing something I love, so you can't get it much better.

I think my advice to students would be just to keep an open mind, investigate all the research that is happening at the moment - there's a lot of papers - and yeah, just go for broke.