The best time to rear the leaf-roller moth is in the hotter months as the leaf-roller moths are more active due to the higher temperatures. In relation to the school year this means that rearing and release needs to take place in either Term One or Four.

Materials required to rear the leaf-roller moths

- Potted bitou bush plants
- Pot saucers
- Waxed cardboard containers (eg cardboard milkshake cups)
- Soft nylon gauze
- Elastic bands
- Soft flat forceps
- Small watering can
- Leaf-roller moth egg batches
- Magnifying glasses

Setting up the leaf-roller moth breeding colony

Step 1:
Select a position in the classroom for the rearing cage. The area selected will need to be 1m² and it should be elevated i.e. on a bench or table in full sun light. Make sure the leaves of the plant are not touching the glass as it may burn the leaves.

Step 2:
Select six to ten large healthy potted bitou bush plants from your nursery. Before bringing them into the classroom, remove any dead leaves. Check the base and the rim of the pot for and remove any spiders, caterpillars, aphids or ants.

Step 3:
Place a saucer underneath each of the bitou bush plant pots.

Step 4:
Staple a leaf-roller moth egg batch onto the tips (sections of new growth) of the bitou bush plants with the egg batch against the leaf surface.

Adding new bitou bush plants to the leaf-roller moth colony

Keep a watchful eye on the foliage of the potted leaf-roller moth. If the larvae of the leaf-roller moth defoliate a plant before they are ready to pupate you will need to replace it with a fresh bitou bush plant.

A good indication that the larvae are running out of food is when they begin to drop to the cage floor, climb around the sides of the pots or even up the cage sides.

To add a new food source for the larvae, place a fresh plant near the defoliated plant making sure that the foliage of the old plant is in contact with the new plants foliage. The larvae will move themselves to the new plant.

Leave the old plant for at least a week before removing.