

AUSTRALIAN NATIVE PLANTS SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

HAKEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 85

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Dear members.

This summer and early autumn time has been one of many contrasts. Large falls of rain up the east coast of Australia and inland Queensland and New South Wales, a very long hot summer and no rain in Western Australia, and a long summer with little moisture in South Australia and western Victoria. Here at Elliminyt in the western district of Victoria it has been particularly dry and the local rainfall recorders say that it is the driest in 82 years. We had about 25 mm of rain in late December and since then there has only been a few showers. The sandy loam soils dried out completely and after three hot windy days in early March a number of Hakeas, Banksias and Telopeas got sunburnt leaves. I had been watering the smaller plants but after this episode I realized the old and bigger plants also needed a watering. In respect to the Hakeas the worst affected were two Hakea archaeoides, which on reflection come from the Port Macquarie area where they receive summer rainfall. So far they still have some green leaves so I am hopeful they will recover. Hakea salicifolia which grows along the coastal inland hills in New South Wales also suffered badly and is still looking pretty sick. However after two deep waterings there is some sign of life on branches where the seed capsules have not opened. On branches where the seed capsules have opened I believe there will be no regrowth. Hakea brachyptera did not like the dry either and three quarters of the bush has died. It maybe the way it responds to drought in the West.

The only loss so far is a large Hakea lasianthoides from the area north of Bullsbrook which I thought would be much more drought tolerant. I collected some seed and hopefully they will germinate shortly.

I have been surprised by how some of the cooler climate Hakeas have responded to the dry conditions. The Tasmanian Hakeas megadenia and epiglottis have proved to be quite drought hardy. Also Hakea asperma from the high Nunninon plateau east of Omeo in Victoria and Hakea aenigma from Kangaroo Island. Of course Hakeas pandanicarpa and nitida have always been drought tolerant.,

Grafting

In April I took up to Ian Evans four Hakea pedunculata, four Hakea arborescens, two Hakea stenophylla ssp stenophylla, two Hakea chordophylla and four Hakea persiehana to be grafted onto Hakea salicifolia. Ian says the grafts look as though they have taken when I spoke to him in late May. In the meantime I have planted Hakea macrocarpa, Hakea persiehana, Hakea pedunculata and Hakea divaricata in the ground to see how they respond to our cooler climate here. If they die then I will put in grafted plants in their place. I feel at long last we are now making progress on the growing of northern species in gardens where cooler climates prevail.

News from members

Neil Marriott's garden at Stawell, Victoria, has survived a very dry summer but he has had some losses especially those from cooler and wetter areas.

Tom Constant from Bullsbrook in Western Australia has had a terrible summer in that the heat and lack of rain has seen many of his established Hakeas die up around the house on the hill. Tom has only tank water so he is restricted in watering plants. Those established down near the creek have mostly survived and future plantings may have to be done down there. The Kangaroos have also been a big problem as the lack of grass has meant they have taken to eating the green leaves on plants.

David Lightfoot from Surrey Hills in Victoria has just planted two Hakea flabellifolia in his garden in sandy soils. He also has large shrubs of multilineaata and bucculenta as well as cucullata and auriculata in sandy soil which he describes as dry hydrophobic.

David Pavlou at Cobram East in Victoria has twenty species growing in sandhill and claypan soils. Amplexicaulis, bucculenta, cinerea, corymbosa, cucullata, elliptica, francisiana, invaginata, laurina, minima, multilineaata, obtusa, orthorrhyncha ssp. filiformis, pandanicarpa, petiolaris ssp. trichophylla, petiolaris ssp. petiolaris, platysperma, pycnoneura, verrucosa and victoria. It reminds me of the eighteen acres of garden we had at Strathmerton eleven years ago when we grew nearly every Hakea species.

New members

We welcome David Pavlou from Cobram East in Victoria. He has seven acres of mostly sandhill country near the Murray River. He is already growing twenty species of Hakeas and looking to grow quite a few more.

Also Craig Morgan from Stoneville in the Darling Ranges in Western Australia. He will have no trouble in growing many of the Western Australian species and some of the local species such as amplexicaulis, erinacea and cristata will probably come up naturally in his garden.

Lisa Cuthbert from Albany. Lisa teaches Conservation and Ecology Management at Albany so it will be interesting to have her input into growing and conserving Hakea species.

Bryan Rau from Barkley in Victoria. Bryan lives in a climate of dry hot summers and cool wet winters where the soil can be more clay than loam. Hakea decurrens ssp. physocarpa grows locally.

Finance report

Balance forward	4188-13
Income membership	75-00
Expenditure	
Printing and postage of newsletters	78-00
Balance at 1 st June 2024.	4185-13

Seed bank

I encourage members to make use of the seed bank. For the first time we have seed of northern species, which are usually very hard to obtain. Even if your climate and soils are not ideal there are a number of people who are now good at grafting, so why not have a go. Also why not grow some extra Hakea species to sell at your local APS plants sale or meeting night.

The winter flowering season has begun

People using Facebook have started putting up photos of Hakeas in flower. The first to appear was Burrendong Beauty and then obtusa which usually flowers later here at Elliminyt. Others to follow in mid May were laurina, petiolaris ssp trichophylla, bicornata and orthorrhyncha ssp. filiformis.

Western Australian excursion

Ten members will assemble at Quaalup homestead on the 30th of July for a three-day excursion through the Fitzgerald National Park and the Stirling Ranges. Let's hope the gravel roads are open and we have fine weather. The flora down there has not been greatly affected by the very dry conditions but hopefully they will have good rains in June. We should see great specimens of Hakea victoria with vivid leaf color. Unfortunately my plant here at Elliminyt has not done well due to the soil being too moist in winter.

The Hakea obliqua group

Over the past seventeen years of writing this newsletter I have probably covered every species of Hakea, however it is probably time to recall some of the species. The obliqua Group consists of Hakeas adnata, polyanthema, brachyptera, psilorrhyncha, and two subspecies of obliqua. Hakea obliqua ssp obliqua, and obliqua ssp parviflora.

A non-lignotuberous shrub to 2.0 m tall, H obliqua ssp obliqua occurs in sand heath country east of the Stirling Range towards Israelite Bay. The terete leaves are 1-7cm long and 1.1-2.5mm diameter with a stiff mucro. The inflorescence consists of 2-8 white flowers in spring. The fruit is broadly ovate 2-4.5 cm long x 1.3-4cm wide and very cork when mature, which may take a couple of years. The corkiness tends to be more pronounced towards the Esperance end. Here in Elliminyt it grows quickly into a very upright prickly bush and has set seed from its first flowering.

Hakea obliqua ssp parviflora differs from obliqua ssp. obliqua in that the terete leaves are of smaller maximum diameter (1.5mm) and the fruit are slightly smaller 2.7-3.5cm long x 1.3cm wide with the surface smooth apart from some corky projections. Its distribution is in sand heaths from Coorow southwards to the Stirling Range and some overlap with obliqua sp obliqua towards Ravensthorpe. The plants I have grown are very dense and drought tolerant. They set seed readily which is difficult to extract from the branches. A great plant for birds to nest in.

Hakea psilorrhyncha tends to be a spindly plant to 4m tall and non-lignotuberous. The terete leaves are stiff with a sharp mucro 2-9.6cm long x 1.5-2.5mm diameter. Sometimes there is a groove on the underside of the leaf. The inflorescence consists of 6-8 creamy white flowers in spring. The fruit is obliquely ovate, erect, 3.5-5.0cm long x 1.5-2.3cm wide with prominent corky projections and a smooth beak. It is reported growing in sand or clay in mallee or open heath but I am more familiar with it in the Eneabba area where it grows in sandy soils that have excellent drainage. I have not been successful here at Elliminyt in keeping this plant alive beyond two years and I think the wet subsoil in winter may be the problem. Its natural occurrence is between Geraldton and Perth.

Hakea adnata is a species which many members have not seen unless you are in the Esperance region. It grows in sandy soils in the Hopetoun to Israelite Bay area and some distance inland. An upright shrub to 3.5m, non-lignotuberous with broom-like foliage. Leaves 2.5 to 13cm long and terete 1 to 1.5mm diameter. The mucro is bent. The inflorescence consists of 2-6 white flowers. The fruit is generally erect obliquely ovate 2.5-3.8cm long by 2-3cm wide. Its surface is generally smooth but can have tiny pustules. This species grows easily for me at Elliminyt where it flowers and sets seed. I have had a stalk break off at base and this was replaced with more roots which is quite unusual for Hakeas. Not grown by many members but worthy of a place in larger gardens.

Hakea brachyptera is a low shrub, 0.4 to 1.0m high and non-lignotuberous with dense foliage. The leaves are terete 3 to 9.5cm long by 0.7 to 1.3mm diameter and can be curved and split into three segments. The mucro is erect. The inflorescence consists of 1 to 5 small pink to red flowers. The fruit is obliquely ovate and at right angle to the stalk, 2 to 2.8cm long by 1.7 to 2.0cm wide. The surface of the fruit is roughish. The seed wing surrounds the seed.

Hakea brachyptera in some ways is very similar to *Hakea polyanthema*. However, *polyanthema* grows south east of Geraldton and has larger flowers, and the fruit is parallel to the stalk. Also the fruit valves of *Hakea brachyptera* open down one side only whereas with *Hakea polyanthema* they open down both sides. It is not very often grown in our gardens and not plentiful in its occurrence in the wild. It occurs between Wagin and Lake Magenta and south to the Stirling Range in sandy soils. I have two plants, the older one has flowered but three quarters of it has died in the dry summer we have had here. Seed tends to be hidden in older foliage under the bush.

The winter flowering season has begun. As this newsletter is sent out, *Hakeas petiolaris*, *orthorrhyncha* ssp. *filifolia*, *drupacea*, *bicornata*, *verrucosa*, *scoparia* ssp. *trycherica*, and many more to follow in the next two months.

I am pleased to see the rain has finally come to the West as it has been a terrible long hot summer. Unfortunately only 50mm here in the past three months and June is looking very dry.

The photos are from my garden of plants now in flower: *Hakeas bicornata*, *myrtoides*, *marginata*, and *scoparia* ssp. *trycherica* from the base of Mount Ragged in the Cape Arid NP. It is perhaps my favourite because of its remoteness and density of flowering.

I am appreciative of the efforts our *Hakea* members put into growing *Hakeas* in different climates and soils, however it also says something about the ability of *Hakeas* to adapt and build on the knowledge of this genus.

Happy gardening, Paul.



Hakea marginata



Hakea scoparia ssp. *trycherica*



Hakea bicornata



Hakea myrtooides