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HAKEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NUMBER 34

Dear Members,

Due to mostly personal reasons I have given up the position of study group leader .

I have not been able to give the time and effort to the position it deserves so hopefully it will change with a new leader and direction in the future.

I would like to thank all the people who took the trouble to write to me while I held this position. I will try to write personally to those concerned. There were also a couple of people who right from the start gave me the impression with various criticisms that made it clear that they were not happy with me holding this position but will leave it at that as I just think they had some kind of agenda and were being childish and immature.

SEEDBANK One of the most important things in any study group is a seedbank of as many species as possible but even more vital is that the seed gets used while it is fresh and viable as I don't think its much point in storing seed and not getting used. I have not purchased any seed from a commercial seed company for these reasons but have relied on fellow members including myself to collect seed from their own plantations so ensureing the seed is fresh and viable so also avoiding disappointing results for the people wanting to germinate hakea.

Members and others are welcome to write to me regarding seed now and in the future ,I am sure other members will be the same.

At the moment it is still very dry and disappointing as is the case with most of the country. My own collection has diminished the last three or so years with the loss of at least twenty or so hakea species. As a result of the continuing adverse conditions I have put my propagating and replanting ambitions on hold until conditions improve. On the brighter side some species have flowered nearly every year *grammatophylla* , *bucculenta*, *recurva* *Francissiana*, *purpurea* and of course *lorea* in its various forms are simply magnificent and every garden should have one. Species that had dry times

from the day they were planted never got established finally succumbed to plant heaven (it must be pretty crowded up there now) established plants like The sericea, decurrens groups also have succumbed this year.

HYBRIDS IN HAKEA

When I first became interested in native plants and hakea in particular it was believed that hakea did not hybridise, but anyone with a large collection of hakea in close proximity like myself will end up with some surprises in the future. I think that it is accepted that the cultivar 'burrendong beauty' is a hybrid between *petiolaris* x *myrtooides*. I have grown seedlings from this plant but all have tendered towards *myrtooides* and not *petiolaris*. It seems an odd union the smallest and the largest but I may be corrected on this.

Quite some time ago at a hakea weekend held in the wimmera district of Victoria in a member's garden there was a *bucculenta* x with crimson flowers and leaves with three nerves per leaf (*bucculenta* only has one).

I have produced the same also from *bucculenta* seed both *multineata* and *grammatophylla* were growing next to one another.

I have also a *bucculenta* x with short deep purplish red flowers. Also there is a *hakea* *grammatophylla* seedling with flowers at least double the length of the normal but this could just be just a variation but it will be nice when mature. Another frustration with the drought not being able to continue to grow a larger number of these seedlings to see what turns up futurewise.

The plantations of Paul Kennedy at Strathmerton Victoria, Max Ewer at Avenue Range South Australia and Geoff Cooke from Wisleigh Victoria will I am sure will produce some exciting hybrids in the future.

Im sure there could be others but these are the gardens that I know of

I will take this opportunity to again thank everyone concerned that has helped me over the time I have been leader to the people both members and non members who have kindly sent me seed and other information and the nice friendly letters I have received over time'

I wish the new leader all the best and good wishes in their new position.

Although it's a few months away yet I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and happy new year and hope everyone receives heaps of rain.

Yours faithfully

Len.