

AUSTRALIAN NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY, AUSTRALIA

HAKEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No.47

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Dear members.

At long last I can get down to typing this newsletter. October was a busy month with the ANPSA conference and seminar in Adelaide and travelling north into NSW to meet up with Southern Highlands members and relatives. There are benefits in travelling in that you get to see some of the Hakeas in the wild and catch up with some of the Hakea Study Group members and local group members. Just north of Goulburn in a way side stop I had the pleasure of finding *Hakea sericea* and *Hakea dactyloides*, the latter quite visible on the side of the highway as it was in flower. Further north at Point Bonney near Port Macquarie there is a reserve that has a big population of *Hakea teretifolia* ssp. *hirsuta* and when it is in flower the masses of white are very striking even on a dull day. It does not seem long since the June newsletter was sent out, however there is a lot to report on.

Vale Geoff Cooke.

Geoff was a member of the Bairnsdale Group in Victoria and an avid Hakea grower and propagator. His previous garden of about five acres at Wiseleigh had over 100 Hakea species and he was always on the lookout to discover populations of Hakeas in the East Gippsland area. Over the past ten years Geoff had two major open heart operations and the specialist had advised him to take it easy. However Geoff decided to live life to the full and continued his propagation and garden interests. Only last year he went out and climbed Mount Howitt (about 1500m high) and went on trips north east of Omeo to find the wild population of *Hakea asperma*. Geoff was instrumental in getting the Hakea Study Group reactivated and pushed me into the taking on the leadership role. I had planned in early 2012 to return with Geoff to the Omeo area to have another look at *Hakea asperma*, sadly now I will have to do it without him. A memorial service for Geoff was held in Bairnsdale on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. of November.

Max Ewers garden at Lucindale, SA.

On the way to the ANPSA conference and seminar in Adelaide I stopped off at Lucindale to have what is probably the last look at Max Ewers superb Hakea collection. Max sold his property recently as was to move into Naracoorte at the end of November. Max hopes the young couple who have bought it will take an interest in maintaining the garden as it is and possibly picking and selling Hakea seed. It was a showery day and with an umbrella over my head I went around the rows of Hakeas admiring just how well most had grown and flowered. Even Hakeas from warmer climates had grown far better than I would have expected. His garden of Hakeas is a living proof of the adaptability of this genus to different climates and soil types. Max continued to put plants in and maintained his garden in immaculate condition right up to his departure. At nearly ninety, Max certainly deserved to take life a little more easy.

Pangarinda arboretum.

On the way to Adelaide I stopped off at Pangarinda arboretum to look at the large display of Hakeas species, most of which have been donated by Max Ewer to the arboretum. The arboretum is a link in the chain of endeavour to conserve Australia's threatened flora, especially those from drier areas. Thirty hectares of denuded sandhills have been planted out and I was surprised to see how well plants had done considering the low rainfall and hot summers. Located near Wellington East, just 10 klms. off the main Melbourne – Adelaide highway, it is a must see place to visit if you want to look at Hakeas and other Australian flora.

Hakea Study Group display at ANPSA seminar.

At the biennial ANPSA seminars Study Groups are invited to put on displays in order to promote the groups activities, to share knowledge with those attending, and hopefully attract some new members. Thanks to Max Ewer who brought in display material we were able to set up quite a good presentation. A lot of questions were asked about the various Hakeas on display and why they were not in most cases to be found in our gardens. This of course goes back to the core aim of our society to promote the growing of Australian plants. In many Groups I have noticed the fall off in the variety of plants brought in to share with members at meetings, and perhaps the art of propagating has now been left to a few. I also brought along a board with photos of Hakeas in flower and Max had some advanced Hakea "Stockdale Sensations" (laurina form) for sale.

Oh where have the spring rains gone!!

We had our annual rainfall of 450mm in the first seven months of the year, and then when spring arrived it just dried up. September rainfall was 36mm and October 10mm. Today the 9<sup>th</sup> of November a fall of 41mm finally drenched the garden after weeks of temperatures around the 30 degrees C mark. I hope it is the beginning of above average summer rainfall as it would be nice to give the plants a second summer of good soaking rains. John Nevins from Armidale said they had 100mm in October and early rains had occurred in November. In southern parts of Victoria, South Australia and NSW spring rains had been good, so Hakeas in members gardens should be flourishing. Rains in Western Australia appear to have been good despite a late start to the autumn season.

The flowering of Hakeas

The wet summer of 2010/11 had given impetus to many Hakeas to flower profusely. Hakea purpurea was a blaze of red for over a month and this tough plant from near Chinchilla in Qld. deserves to be grown more readily. Hakea ochroptera from Dorrigo in northern NSW also flowered so profusely that the leaves were hidden by the white flowers. As reported in the last newsletter Hakea lorea from Central Australia started to flower in May and is just finishing now. However seed capsules only started to form in the last month when warmer weather occurred. There seems to be no correlation between the amount of flower and the amount of seed set. The three plants of Hakea orthorrhyncha ssp. filiformis all flowered with perhaps more than a thousand flowers on each plant, but seed capsules formed were 0, 1, and 15 respectively. Perhaps the right pollinators were not present, Max Ewer has a lot of small honeyeater birds, whereas up here they tend to be only the white plumed honeyeater, or the larger noisy miner. Ones that do not seem to have any trouble setting seed are the forms of petiolaris and laurina.

The effect of warmth on Hakeas.

We had a very cold winter days this year and though there was probably only about two light frosts I noticed the colour of the leaves of the Hakeas from warmer winter climates tended to be a yellow green. Hakea lorea from the Kimberleys, Hakea stenophylla ssp. stenophylla from Shark Bay and Hakea candolleana from the Kalbarri region did not look happy, however as the warm to hot days arrived in October, these plants quickly took on a much greener colour in the leaves.

Kristine Gow's garden.

Kristine lives at Hilltop, a small town about 100kms. south- west of Sydney, just off the Hume Highway. I always said there had to be a spot where the climate was ideal!! I am informed that they do not get the hot muggy days of Sydney nor the cold winter weather of Goulburn. The hottest day in summer is around 35 degrees C and they have no frosts. The rainfall is over 750mm and they sit on top of a sandstone and granite ridge. The only draw back is that the sandy soil is littered with big granite boulders which makes it hard to find sufficient soil depth to put plants in. Nevertheless Kristine has established a large garden of Australian plants which include a number of Hakeas. I had the pleasure of being able to speak to local APS members there on Hakeas and hopefully many more species will now be added to their gardens. Some of the Hakeas Kristine has growing are nitida, victoria, multilineata, francisiana, serica, and dactyloides,

Hakea trifurcata – yellow flowered form.

Margaret Pieroni has sent me photos of Hakea trifurcata which has yellow flowers from the Williams area in Western Australia. The only flower colour that I have come across on trifurcata in the wild is one with white flowers. This yellow flowered form is a very showy plant and would make a lovely garden specimen. There are a number of Hakeas which do have different flower colours. One that comes to mind is Hakea preissii which is usually seen with lime green flowers but there is also a pinky red form of it too. I have included photos taken by Margaret of this yellow form in this newsletter.

#### Seed report

I have been working on getting out seed to various propagators who are members of the Hakea Study Group. The Melton-Bacchus Marsh group now has seed of about 100 species and have started to propagate them. I have also sent seed to James Martin at Tamworth who will also propagate for the Study Group members to buy. My hope is to advise you in advance what will be available for sale before the general public have the opportunity to buy them.

This year I will have seed of Hakea collina for the first time. I have put bags around the seed which is fattening up nicely. As I believe I have the only plant in cultivation, the propagation of this species to get into members gardens is of great importance. Seed is required of Hakea flabellifolia, do any members have plants with seed on them?

#### Financial statement

Balance forward	\$2250-89
Income Subscriptions	310-00
Expenditure	
Printing/postage of newsletter No. 46	93-20
Seed packets and postage	7-00
Balance as of the 30 <sup>th</sup> October, 2011	\$2460-69

#### Welcome to new members.

There has been a number of new members join since the last newsletter. I welcome Geoff Kenna from Alice Springs, Dean Salter from Junortoun near Bendigo and Victoria Tanner from Canberra and the APS Keilor Plains Group.

#### Letters from members etc.

Tom Constant wrote that the large patch of Hakea myrtoides near Bullsbrook in WA had been badly grazed by Kangaroos and he could not find any live plants. With clearing of land our native animals have less land to eat off and hence more pressure is exerted on those remaining areas of bush. Hakea myrtoides does have a lignotuber, so I hope it can regenerate when the Kangaroos move on.

Last weekend I had the pleasure of visiting Barry Teague's garden at Swan Hill as part of the APS Vic. Quarterly weekend. Barry has raised his garden beds some 500mm above the black silty soil and brought in sandy loam. He finishes off with about 75mm of white pebblerly stone. Some of the Hakeas he had growing were Corymbosa, aculeata, burrendong beauty, elliptica, cucullata, probably obtusa, lehmannii, multilineata, laurina and varia.

Pauline Wicksteed from Gunning (near Yass) reports that macreana, decurrens and tephrosperma are growing well despite the very cold winters. She is trying other Hakea species too, but they are still small at present.

#### The Hakea obliqua Group continued.

Another species in this group defined by the pollen presenter being an oblique disc is Hakea adnata. It does not have the stiff foliage of obliqua but more of a broom like foliage. It grows in sandy soils in the Esperance area along the coast where winter rainfall is high. Also its seed capsules do not have the corky protrusions that the other species in the obliqua group have. It generally has a bent mucro (point at end of leaf).

Thankyou to all who have renewed their subscription. Summer is nearly here and I have been putting some hessian covers over the smaller Hakeas from cooler areas. I have also started doing some pruning, but as usual I am away behind as it is usually the last task I get down too. I wish you all a happy Christmas. Regards, Paul.

*Paul*



*Hakea trifurcata* (yellow-flowered form)



*Hakea purpurea*



*Hakea trifurcata* (yellow-flowered form)



*Hakea ochroptera*