

AUSTRALIAN NATIVE PLANTS SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

HAKEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 65

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Dear members.

We have had a very cold winter and now as spring emerges the cold remains with very wet conditions. Oh how I long for some warm sunshine to brighten our day. However the Hakeas have stood up to the cold weather very well and many have now flowered.

Rainfall in August was 30mm but in the first 6 days of September another 56mm was recorded making the soil very moist indeed. The rain kept falling in September with 150mm recorded. Fortunately my drainage work of spoon drains and deeper drains with slotted pipe with blue metal cover on top shed a lot of water straight into the Council drains. Most of the Hakeas like well drained conditions, so building up beds and getting rid of excess water will help in making them survive.

The collection here now stands at 162 species out of a possible 169. Seed of some of the remaining species hopefully will arrive here before Christmas so that I can propagate them over summer.

### **Wanderings.**

Barbara and I spent most of June and July in northern NSW and Queensland to escape the cold conditions down here. I did look around for Hakeas and visited some members' gardens. Just to the east of Cann River I found *Hakea decurrens* ssp. *physocarpa*, *Hakea ulicina* and *Hakea teretifolia* ssp. *hirsuta* all growing on the edge of a swamp. I had been looking for some time to find the Victorian form of *teretifolia* in East Gippsland and was delighted to come across it.

We also had the pleasure of visiting the garden of Sue and Graeme Jones at Sale and being able to walk around and look at all of their Hakea species which included some of the rare species such as *Hakea oligoneura* and *Hakea megalosperma*. Unfortunately rabbits are also multiplying around Sale and like to burrow near plants in gardens.

Further north we caught up with Phil Trickett and Catriona Bates and their magnificent garden at Milton. The Hakeas there are mainly grafted but were some lovely specimens in flower and one that I dearly like is the Hakea from Mount Ragged in Western Australia, *scoparia* ssp. *trycherica* which has purpley –pink flowers that are very pretty.

Up at Hervey Bay in Queensland I came across *Hakea actites* growing in wet areas. It can grow to 2m x 2m and flower profusely in that more warm temperate climate.

### **Propagation.**

The seed of the few species that did not germinate over summer were left in their containers with vermiculite and as the cold weather approached seedlings started to emerge. These included *cygna* ssp. *cygna* and *cygna* ssp. *needlei*. I also put seed of *Hakea chromatropa* and *epiglottis* ssp. *milliganii* down too as these need cold weather to germinate. My next big effort to germinate

Hakeas will begin again about Christmas time and hopefully I will have plenty to give away in the autumn.

Phil Trickett has been trying to graft some of the northern Hakeas. He has tried *arborescens* and *macrocarpa* so far. I will let you know in due course if they are taking. If successful, it would be a great result in helping to establish these species in southern gardens.

#### **New members.**

I welcome Joe Stephens from Cann River, and Andre Penders from Canberra. I hope they find the Hakea Study Group interesting and try and grow many of our Hakea species. In due course in my travels I hope to catch up with them. Joe says there is ten species of Hakea in his area.

#### **News from members.**

Tom Constant and Jennifer Young went out to the roadside population of Hakea *chromatropa* north east of Perth. Despite a yellow marker designating a population of rare plants the local Council grader still managed to wipe out six of the twenty plants that we had found at the site. Tom and Jennifer planted one new Hakea *chromatropa* donated by Alex George at the site. Let's hope it survives. The need to get this species established in our gardens is very important.

Sue and Graeme Jones showed me around their couple of hectares of native garden at Sale. They have a large collection of Hakeas growing in sandy loam over clay. Despite establishing wind breaks around their property boundary they still experience significant frosts.

Hugh Stacy writes that in one of the newsletters Hakea *constablei* was mentioned. He was fortunate to meet Ernie Constable who for many years was a collector for RBG Sydney. In his retirement years in Blackheath in the Blue Mountains he was always ready to help anyone interested in native plants. He told me one place to look for his Hakea as I recall. I have his namesake growing up here ever since. I have only one plant left of the three I planted 25 years ago. It competes for light, so the flowers only on the top 1 m of a 8m tall plant. I wonder if those growing Hakea *constablei* have noticed it takes two years for the seed to mature. At the next flowering they are still bright green with only the outer tip showing its woody appearance.

In newsletter No.64 you mentioned about Tony and Ann Crawford's having a 2.5m high Hakea *epiglottis* which flowers but sets no seed. Hugh says it was one Hakea he found in central Tasmania last September. There was an area of bushland with a number of plants in flower. Whilst looking for fruit I noticed that all plants had plenty of flowers, but some had no fruits. Rather strange I thought. Later on from the internet I found a description saying "functionally unisexual shrub, rarely hermaphrodite (bisexual), compact to 3m, inflorescence on male plants 2-8 flowers and on female 1-3 flowers.

It would be interesting if members growing this species to check their plants when flowering to note whether seed has previously been set and if not whether there are >3-8 flowers per group in the inflorescence (male plant). Further to normalise seed production it seems that plants of this species must be grown in groups, or within reasonable proximity.

Editor: I have checked my flowering plants of *epiglottis* and they all seem to have 3 or more flowers per bundle. I will check to see if fruit is formed in a month and report back.

Joe Stephens has written about the narrow-leaf form of *H. eriantha* that occurs in the Lakes Entrance area of East Gippsland. It is quite a lovely plant but needs room as it can grow to 6m plus. It has been confused with the narrow-leaf form of Hakea *salicifolia* ssp. *angustifolia*, which grows in the Sydney region and has more of a circular fruit with raised black pustules, whereas Hakea *eriantha* has boat shaped fruit. Joe is also growing the variegated form of Hakea *salicifolia* from cuttings.

### **Inverawe Native Gardens, Tasmania.**

In the last newsletter space did not permit me to write about my visit to Inverawe Native Gardens at Margate. The garden is of about 22 acres set on a steep slope overlooking the D'Entrecasteaux Channel with Bruny Island in the distance. The owners, Bill and Margaret Chesnut, have planted out the site with native plants that have grown up and provided a shaded canopy over meandering paths cut into the hillside. They have included quite a few Hakeas in the gardens, including Tasmanian species plus some of the Western Australian species such as *multilineata* and of course some of the eastern species such as *macraeana* and *decurrens* ssp. *physocarpa*. It is a very tranquil spot with plenty of seats to stop and relax taking in the views and flora.

### **Financial statement.**

Balance forward. 30 <sup>th</sup> . April		3283-73
Income:		
Subscriptions.	190-00	
Expenditure.		
Printing and postage Newsletter No.64	74-16	
Balance		3399-57

I thank all those members who have renewed their subscription to the Hakea Study Group on receiving their renewal notice.

### **Seed bank.**

A number of members have made use of it and it is good to see members having a go at propagation. I have received requests for seed of *rhombales*, *conchifolia* and *orthorrhyncha* ssp. *orthorrhyncha*. If you can help it would be appreciated.

### **Hakea crawl, 2018**

All being well I hope to lead a Hakea excursion to the Jerramungup- Albany area in mid to late September. I know people start making travel decisions early in the new year so I thought I should give notice now.

### **In the garden.**

I have two forms of *Hakea multilineata*. The broad leaf form (leaves to 1.5cm wide) from the Wongan Hills area flowered first and was followed a month later by the narrower leaf form, which had brighter pink flowers. Both flowered for over a month. For the first time ever *Hakea longiflora* flowered. Its yellow flowers are numerous but do not stand out. It is rare in its natural habitat so I hope some seed is set. *Hakea francisiana* had bright pink flowers which stand out against the grey-green foliage. *Hakea decurrens* ssp. *platytaenia* flowered profusely with whitish flowers and is now setting seed. *Hakea lasianthoides* (the Walyunga form) from the Bullsbrook area is a mass of creamy flowers and I noticed a lot of bees and insects were visiting it whilst next to it *Hakea macraeana* with its vivid white flowers had no bees or insects visiting it. I expect about 50 *Hakea* species will flower this year, which is wonderful considering some plants are not more than two years old.

*Hakea erecta* and *Hakea rigida*.

In my travels in Western Australia last year I made a trip away out east to Wialki to look at *Hakea rigida* growing in deep yellow sand. Both plants have pink flowers but *erecta* can have white flowers too and is much more widespread over the wheatbelt, whereas *rigida* is confined to a small area. *Hakea rigida* can have a terete pentagonal shaped leaf to 140mm long by 1-2mm diameter with 5 longitudinal veins at angles, convex to shallowly concave between angles and sometimes twisted

near the base. It can also have a flat linear leaf form with 5 longitudinal veins, two marginal on the upper surface and three beneath. The seed wing is also black.

*Hakea erecta* has more of a flat leaf, twisted at base, to 97mm long by 2.5 to 5mm wide. It has three veins on the top surface, one on each margin and a central longitudinal vein and three longitudinal veins underneath.

I have seedlings of *H. rigida* which still have broad linear leaves at present, but I am looking forward to seeing the mature leaves appearing. As it grows in deep sand in a low rainfall area, it will be interesting to see how it performs in a wetter climate. I would be interested to hear from others who have grown these two species. Photos of these two species would be appreciated.

**Photo credits.**

I thank those members who send me photos of Hakeas. The photos included in this newsletter are as follows.

*Hakea eriantha* fine leaf form- Joe Stephens.

*Hakea chordophylla*- Victoria Tanner

*Hakea scoparia*- David Pye.

*Hakea oleifolia*- Kevin Sparrow

*Hakea lehmanniana*- Margaret Pieroni

It is another bleak day outside so I have no excuse in not finishing this newsletter on time. I hope those areas across Australia lacking rain get some in the next few weeks.

Cheers, Paul.



*H. scoparia*



*H. eriantha*, narrow-leaved form



*H. chordophylla*



*H. oleifolia*



*H. lehmanniana*