

Hello Everyone,

At the meeting of Study Group leaders held during the seminar after the Biennial Conference last November, there was a great deal of discussion about the value of work done in these groups and how to record the results. Geoff Butler (Canberra) said that it was well nigh impossible to set positive guidelines for recording and reporting, but he suggested that it would be better to think up a small research project on 3 - 6 species with a finite aim and a finite time limit. John Colwill (W.A.W.S.) said that it was essential in these research projects that members were not told "This is the way to do this".

Taking both of these suggestions to heart, I decided that I would select three hardy but attractive species and ask you to record their progress from germination onwards. The original species chosen were *H. verrucosa*, *rugosa* and *purpurea*, representing W.A., south-east Australia and Queensland. Unfortunately I could not obtain enough seed for the latter two, so this time the species will be *H. verrucosa*, *sericea* (pink), and *francisiana*, mainly because I have a good supply of seed. Those of you who are already growing these hakeas will not be sent seed, but I would ask you to note anything of value, such as the length of the flowering period, resistance to pests, habit of growth, reaction to drought or overwatering, on anything else that occurs to you. It may be that the flowers are not being fertilised by bees. John Colwill's advice is worth keeping in mind, try different methods of growing if your results could be better and do not be afraid of experimenting with different soils etc.

It is well to remember that the Proteaceae family in general seem to have good drainage as a prime requisite, but hakeas will tolerate a wide range of soils.

Mrs. Jeanette Closs retired as Federal Co-ordinator of Study Groups at this meeting and Jo Walker, from Canberra, has taken over in her place. Jeanette did a mighty job, quietly and efficiently, for six years and was very supportive of leaders and members. We welcome Jo, and wish her well. She has a 20 acre hilly block with a winter-running creek through the middle of it and hopes to try out hakeas to mix with the *H. sericea* and *nodosa* plants already there.

A visitor to the seminar from Newcastle, N.S.W., said that the following hakeas grew well in his district in spite of periods of high humidity during the warmer months: *H. ferruginea*, *lehmanniana*, *francisiana*, *victoria*, *verrucosa*, *cinerea*, *conchifolia*, *cucullata*, *sericea* and *marginata*.

In the last newsletter, I promised to look into making out a list of those hakeas that are about one metre tall or smaller. I have such a list collated from many sources, but from my own experience several do grow much higher than stated in books.

#### HAKEAS 1m HIGH

- Ambigua 1m. narrow lanceolate leaves, white flowers similar to *H. elliptica*.
- Auriculata Bushy shrub usually up to 2 ft., white flowers, leaves broad and truncate, prickly-toothed, tapering into a long narrow stem-clasping portion. New growth bronze coloured.
- Brachyptera A low intricately-branched shrub, slender terete foliage, very small flowers.
- Candolleana Erect shrub, leaves can be terete and some narrow-linear.
- Clavata Low spreading shrub, leaves very thick and veinless, 1-2" long. Flowers pink, very sweetly scented. Near the sea this plant barely reaches 2' high, inland from beach, reaches about 2m.
- Conchifolia Rounded shrub to 1m by 70 cm, with stiff rounded leaves folded like a mussel shell enclosing pink or white flowers in winter and spring. Fairly slow growing species.
- Costata An erect shrub to 1m. Foliage narrow linear, pungent pointed  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long crowded along stems. Flowers white in axillary clusters.

- Dolichostyla* Reported to grow to 1m. Has white flowers and grows in wet sand areas of the Stirling area, W.A.
- Flabellifolia* Outstanding foliage plant with fan-shaped leaves grows under 1m high. Flowers small and variously described as white or greenish-yellow or cream.
- Gilbertii* A member of the *sulcata* group, grows about 1m, sometimes to 4'. Leaves are short and flowers are in dense axillary clusters, white and sometimes deep pink aging to white.
- Incrassata* A shrub up to 1m high with oblong-linear or linear-lanceolate leaves, 1 or 2 or rarely 3" long. Very small flowers.
- Lehmanniana* Commonly called the Blue Hakea because of the pale blue flowers it produces, however the flowers can be almost white, lilac or a deep steel blue. Grows to about 1m with linear-terete leaves from 1 - 3" long. Most unusual fruit with fringed or branching prickles. I have seen two specimens in gardens well over 2m.
- Lissocarpa* Low, spreading shrub to 1m, leaves divided to 4cm long. Flowers usually white, but may be pink. A taller form to 2m is known.
- Megalosperma* Reported to be a low shrub to 1m, flowers red, Irwin area W.A.
- Myrtoïdes* Most desirable, almost prostrate shrub, 30 cm high. Short prickly foliage, deep purple-pink flowers in spring. Requires perfect drainage and good sunlight.
- Stenocarpa* Bushy shrub about 1m in height. Leaves linear or linear-lanceolate with prominent midrib. Flowers cream in late winter, spring.
- Additions: Two species which sometimes grow to about 1.5m and are excellent garden plants are:
- Bakerana* (N.S.W) Rounded shrub with needle-like leaves to 7 cm. Flowers are pink in large clusters on old wood in winter and spring. Propagation is reported difficult from either seeds or cuttings.
- Circumalata* A bushy shrub, usually spreading wider than high, terete leaves about 1" long, flowers pink and scented appear in winter and spring.

There are several more hakeas that have two forms, one about 1 metre tall, I will list them in a later newsletter.

During the seminar in December, a busload of SGAP members were taken to the Botanic Gardens annexe at Cranbourne to inspect plantings of native plants but in particular, a sand dune area planted with banksias, dryandras and hakeas. The hakeas appeared to be struggling in a windy aspect but it was fascinating to see how well *H. megalosperma* plants were faring. Alf Salkin who was in charge of the project, said he had experimented and planted the large seeds directly into the sand and apparently the deep sand anchored the plants. This species comes from W.A. in the Irwin province, south of Geraldton.

#### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

- Hugh Stacy, 16 Booyong Avenue, Lugarno, 2210.  
S.G.A.P. Victorian Region  
Allan Foster, 40 Fairfax Road, Warner's Bay 2282.  
David Fitzgerald, 63 Kintore Avenue, Prospect 5082.  
Adrian Nicholas, 12 Oval Avenue, Woodville South 5011.  
Dick Burns, 17 Deviation Road, Penguin 7316.  
N. J. Bone, 21 Vickers Street, Kialla 3631.

#### SEED BANK

Please refer to the last newsletter. Seed of the following is now out of stock: *ferruginea*, *florulenta*, *incrassata*, *pandanicarpa*.

#### GRAFTED HAKEAS

Doug McKenzie, 66 Adco Grove, Ocean Grove 3226, has been grafting hakeas for some time and using *H. salicifolia* (syn. *saligna*) as stock has been very successful with grafted *H. bucculenta*, *francisiana*, *multilineata*. The grafted plants present few difficulties and can stand strong winds as opposed to the grafted banksias. Doug has been selling some of his plants at the Victorian Region meetings and may be able to help if anyone wishes to grow a favourite species.

Go<sub>o</sub>d health and good growing till next time - HAZEL BLACKNEY