

**AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY AUSTRALIA**

**HAKEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 76**

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Dear members.

Although we are in the last month of autumn, winter has arrived in Elliminyt. Gone are those lovely warm sunny days, which have been replaced with cloudy days and showers of rain. Nevertheless I have nothing to complain about as the summer-autumn flowering season has been one of the best and many plants have put on a lot of growth. It is in autumn that the Hakeas begin to flower and extend right through to the end of spring. One exception has been *Hakea linearis* which is still flowering despite having started in October.

*Hakea bicornata* was the first to start the flowering season for 2021 and was quickly followed by *petiolaris* ssp. *angusta*, *acuminata*, *megadenia* and *Burrendong Beauty*. A lot more have buds filling out so it will not be long before there will be many Hakeas in flower.

The 125mm of rain in January caused many Hakeas to put on a lot of growth and plants started to interweave and form a dense mass. Whilst this is not in one way a bad thing as in the wild this occurs but wind, insect damage and animal eating of foliage help to prune the plants. My pruning has been very spasmodic so in many cases I will let them determine their own size as pruning now will leave a very disjointed plant. However in saying this some such as *Hakea adnata* have had limbs break away at the base due to the leaf load, so pruning themselves.

**Propagation.**

Thanks to the help of north Queensland members, seed of Hakeas from the Townsville and Atherton Tablelands areas of *Hakeas arborescens*, *persiehana* and *plurinervia* (known as *benthamii* in Queensland.) were forwarded to me and a number of seedlings were germinated using the saucer method. These have been planted into the ground with plastic covers around them and I hope they will survive the cold climate of Elliminyt. I did grow *arborescens* and *plurinervia* at Strathmerton where after a number of years of slow growth they flowered. However I feel the deep sand was not the ideal soil to have them in as they grow naturally in loam to clay loam soils. I also thank Phil and Catriona Trickett for a plant of *Hakea pedunculata* which grows only around Cooktown and further north on Cape York. It too grew slowly and flowered at Strathmerton beside a north east facing brick wall. The collection now stands at 166 with only *lorea* ssp. *borealis* from the Kimberleys, *pulvinifera* from the Keepit Dam area in NSW and *macrocarpa* from the top end of Australia north of Tennant Creek missing. To grow these, grafting is probably the way to go.

I note in some areas mice have been a problem. They can be very destructive in eating germinating seed and young seedlings. If mice are a problem then putting fine wire mesh over trays and laying bait might need to be done. I feel for members in the Gilgandra, Tamworth and Armidale areas where the mice plague is quite severe.

Ian Evans has given me a report on his grafting successes, using *Hakea salicifolia* as the rootstock. The grafts were done in February 2021.

Hakea rhombales 4 grafts, 2 took in 3 weeks, and 2 died. The successful ones were using growing tips.

Hakea aenigma 3 grafts, 1 took in 3 weeks, 1 died and one showing promise.

Hakea chromatropa. 3 grafts, 1 took in two weeks and the other 2 look promising.

Ian has also grafted previously Hakeas bucculenta, multilineata, grammatophylla, orthorrhyncha ssp. orthorrhyncha, and multilineata x grammatophylla. Recently Ian also had success with Hakeas invaginata, incrassata, minyma and stenocarpa. It is my intention to encourage members to continue with grafting experiments of lesser known and rare Hakeas as seed is not easy to come by.

### **Travels.**

I have not ventured far this year with a quick trip to Milton to catch up with Catriona and Phil Trickett and see how their garden was progressing after the summer fires of 2019/2020. The fire did kill a lot of established Hakeas and Banksias and it has been a long progress to replant as the climate is warmer and rainfall can at times be extremely heavy, soaking the ground, which is not good for many Hakeas. Phil does a lot of grafting onto Banksia integrifolia to try and overcome this problem.

### **New members**

We welcome Susan Ehrenberg from Gisborne in Victoria. I am delighted to report she has already over 100 species of Hakea growing. The climate is very similar to Elliminyt but her soil is more of a clay loam rather the sandy loam here at Elliminyt.

Also Linda Cooper from the Adelaide Hills. Linda is about to germinate some Hakea species and will put them in pots as she is planning to move in the near future.

### **Financial Statement.**

Balance forward	3903-99
Income	
Subscriptions	40-00
Expenditure.	
Newsletter No.75 print and post	74-70
Postage seed and cuttings	25-40
Balance as of 31 <sup>st</sup> . of May 2021	\$3763-89

### **Hakea crawl .**

The dates have now been set . We will assemble at Jerramungup on Saturday morning the 10<sup>th</sup>. of September and spend the day exploring the Bremer Bay area and the western end of the Fitzgerald NP. On Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> we will go north exploring the Lake Magenta area and on Monday morning we will leave Jerramungup to go west towards the Stirling Ranges. I hope to find many Hakeas . We will use Jerramungup as the overnight stay for each day trip and I will leave it to each participant to book their accommodation at the Caravan Park.

### **Hakea asperma.**

I have mentioned this species before and that it does not set seed and is located only in a few locations on the Nunniong plateau east of Benambra in Victoria. The two plants I have from cuttings have grown into plants over a meter high and wide. However the most significant feature is that one of them is sending up suckers and starting to spread out further than I would like. The good news is that I now have plants to give away and hence spread the number of plants in the gardens. If you would like one please let me know. It is a cold climate plant so would not go well where summers are hot and dry.

## Letters from members.

I have not had a great deal of correspondence in the past three months by e mail, however the facebook section has been quite busy with photos and comments.

Neil Marriott has sent me an updated list of his Hakea collection, which now numbers 140 species and subspecies. I will help him with seed and some tubestock to further his collection towards that magical number of 169.

I had the pleasure of another Hakea enthusiast in Tom Constant from Western Australia visit our garden here in May and being able to show him many of the Hakeas from Western Australia and how they had prospered here. Hakea members are always welcome to visit.

## The Trifurcata group

In the revision of Hakeas published in Flora of Australia Volume 17B in 1999, they were grouped into 21 sections where Hakeas of similar leaf and flower or seed arrangements were put together. I have never been fully able to understand the groupings as I am not a botanist. However someone may be able to write something in language Hakea growers might understand. Over the years I have written about various species and perhaps now I should start to describe those species that I have left out in various groups. I will start with the Trifurcata group which has Hakeas trifurcata, lasianthoides, lasiantha, erinacea and longiflora. Recently I wrote about Hakeas trifurcata and lasiantha, so I will now say something about the remaining three.

The trifurcata Group is described as mainly shrubs with smooth bark, leaves compound-terete and simple terete or flat with inflorescences an axillary umbel. Flowers 1-10, pedicels pubescent. Perianth curved in bud, splitting to base into four distinct tepals. Pistil 6-10mm long. Seed capsule, solitary on stalk, not markedly woody, smooth surface and not horned. Seed occupying whole valve.

Hakea lasianthoides.

This species comes from the south west forests of Western Australia where summers are relatively cool with some rain and winters cool and wet and can grow to 6m high. However there is an outlier in the Bullsbrook- Bindoon area where the features are nearly identical but the plants are much smaller. In Jennifer's Young book it has been given the name sp. Walyunga.

The leaves are light green, flat and narrowly elliptic 3-11.5cm long by 3-11mm wide. The margins are entire and the tip ends in a point. The inflorescence consists of 2-8 white flowers with pedicels 5.5-10mm long, perianth 4.5 -7mm long and pistil 7.5-8mm long. The seed capsule is on a short stalk and narrow elliptic in shape, 2.5-3.1cm long by about 1cm wide with a smooth surface. The seed is difficult to detect as it is so similar to the leaf.

I grow the Walyunga form at Elliminyt as it is a more compact plant. It flowers profusely in winter but does not set much seed, which tends to remain on the plant for at least two years. This plant is much more tolerant of drier and warmer climates and soil types compared to the lasianthoides growing in sandy loams and granites of the south west of Western Australia.

Hakea erinacea

This species grows in the Darling Ranges east of Perth and extends north as far as Jurien Bay. It is a non-lignotuberous plant found growing in a variety of soils from granitic sands to sandy loams and sandy clays. The summers are hot and dry and the winters wet and cool. The leaves are compound terete with an undivided base of 8-16 mm long and grooved on the underside. The leaves are in segments of 2-8, 2-13 mm long by about 1 mm wide. The inflorescences consist of 4-8 flowers with pedicels of 7-12 mm, perianth 4-7.5 mm and pistil 6-9 mm long. The fruit are boomerang shaped, 1.7 to 2 cm long and 5 to 6 mm wide with a smooth surface with round white pustules and have a pronounced beak. The seed occupies the whole of the valve of the seed capsule. It is known as the "hedgehog Hakea" because of its prickly nature. Here at Elliminyt (part of Colac, Victoria) it grows very quickly to a bush 1.2m by 1.2m in sandy loams and flowers in winter, although some

isolated flowers occur at other times of the year. It has proved to be adaptable to growing well in a variety of climates and soils but its ability to stand up to humid conditions is not known. Pruning is required to keep it in a rounded shape.

*Hakea longiflora*.

This species occurs in the Mount Lesueur and Dandaragan area of Western Australia and is on the list of rare and threatened species because of the small number of known plants. It is a lignotuberous dense upright plant to about 0.75m tall and grows in heathland in gravelly sand over sandstone. The leaves are compound terete, rigid with an undivided base of 3-10mm long. The compound leaves are normally in threes shaped like a pitch fork and 1-10 mm long by 0.8-1.5 mm wide. The inflorescences have two cream flowers which are elongated. Pedicels 2-5 mm long, perianth 6.5 – 12 mm long and pistil 12-14 mm long. The seed capsule is not leaf like, narrowly ovate 1.8-2.5cm long and about 7mm wide with a long beak and a smooth surface with black pustules. The seed is boomerang shaped. Often confused with *Hakea erinacea* but when you look at both specimens in a garden setting you can easily see the leaf difference.

This species is now in a number of members gardens and growing well. It is very prickly and tends to spread out as it matures. As more seed becomes available from garden plants it will be further distributed to ensure its survival. It can also be grown from cuttings and Chris Nickolic from southeast Queensland has been able to graft it as well. It is a lovely low plant that requires little maintenance once established.

#### **Seed bank.**

The seed bank is there for members to access in the hope that more species will be grown. At present there is a small amount of some of the subtropical species which we have not had before. The frost tolerance of these species is probably not high.

The need to get rare and poorly known *Hakeas* into cultivation is often on my mind. Out of the 169 *Hakeas* I have a list of about 35 species and subspecies that are in this category. As grafting is starting to assist in this effort, it is a great step forward but there is more that can be done. I have made a note of the 16 species that are rare and difficult to get seed of and will start propagation of these mainly by grafting as seed is not always available. If we are successful then they will be distributed to members as numbers increase. The *Hakeas* I plan to start with are *acuminata*, *aculeata*, *aenigma*, *cygna* ssp *needlei*, *ednieana*, *ivoryi*, *myrtoides*, *megalosperma* and *standleyensis*.

The photos include one from Joe Stephens of *Hakea plurinervia* (known as *Hakea benthamii* in Queensland). I have a five year old plant that flowers and sets seed in the cool climate of Elliminyt. Ian Evans has sent a photo of his grafting success of *Hakea rhombales* grafted onto *Hakea salicifolia*. The other photos are from Lyhn Barfield and her husband of *Hakeas* in flower in their garden of *petiolaris* ssp *petiolaris* and *drupacea*.

I am looking forward to meeting up with Western Australian members and others in September and hope we have some fine weather. Let's hope the coronavirus is under control and no border restrictions apply. We have had a couple of light frosts but all the *Hakeas* look fine. Now is the time to cover up the frost tender species and also do any drainage works to ensure that no plants become waterlogged. Please keep sending in reports and photos.

Cheers, Paul.



*H. plurinervia*



*H. drupacea*



*H. petiolaris* ssp. *petiolaris*



*H. rhombales* grafted onto *H. salicifolia*