

18th October, 1982.

Hello Everyone,

If the predicted dry conditions continue over the summer, the drought resistant claims of the genus *Hakea* are going to be fully tested. The plants that will need the most care are those under two years old but problems also occur when excessively dry soil is flooded when a drought breaks. We will have to wait and see. In Melbourne we have had some good falls of spring rain but as October is our wettest month historically, it is difficult to judge lasting effects.

In July last, Tom and I travelling through N.S.W. on our way to Lismore, called in to see Peter Althofer at the Burrendong Arboretum. The country was already very dry so we were particularly interested to see the stand of *H. macreana* flourishing and looking very green. This is a N.S.W. species, a large bushy shrub to about 3 m with terete, slightly weeping foliage 12 cm long. The white flowers appear in axillary clusters in spring. The fruits are large and warty with a smooth black suture.

Peter also had *H. myrtooides* in flower, a softer pink colour than the purple-pink I had seen elsewhere. It was a very healthy specimen covering the ground very densely.

It was sad to see the gap where the very large *H. varia* shrubs used to be but adverse conditions have to be expected from time to time. There was a very beautiful *H. scoparia* with deep pink flowers blooming well, a flower colour we did not see at all last year in W.A. However, of all Peter's hakeas, the one that excites the most discussion is *H. obtusa*. *H. obtusa* is usually described as a spreading shrub to 1 m, although the only ones I have seen have been in private gardens and twice that height. The leaves are oblong-lanceolate, obtuse or with a callous point contracted into a very short petiole or almost sessile, 4 to 7 cm long, prominently three-nerved. The pink to red flowers occur in dense clusters on the old wood. Peter bought his seed and his plants are low and spreading, with foliage reminiscent of *H. marginata*, lanceolate, acute, pungent pointed, shortly contracted at the base but scarcely petiolate 2 to 4 cm. long, with prominent midrib and nerve-like margins, otherwise veinless. The flowers on Peter's plants occur in dense clusters, pinkish red, in the leaf axils. Obviously these plants are not *H. obtusa* and it is conceivable that they could be an *obtusa* cross with possibly *marginata* as they both occur in the Stirling District of W.A., but on the other hand they may be a relatively uncommon species. I would be glad to hear if anyone else has a similar plant. The plants at Burrendong make a spectacular show and should be excellent for cultivation.

As we travelled further north it was hard to believe it was late winter, there were scarcely any green areas to be seen. However on arriving in Lismore, we were in a heavy rainfall area again and the district looked very good. However, Keith King, President of the SGAP group, told me that hakeas do not do very well there as although they have very good drainage the district may get 60" of rain annually, half of which may fall in the summer. This certainly does pose problems but I am hoping to track down species that may flourish there.

We spent a week on the Gold Coast and part of that time I spent visiting plant nurseries and checking on their stocks of hakeas. The only species I found in abundance was *H. salicifolia*, the broader-leaf form, and I was told that when the narrow leaf form was introduced last year, the public wouldn't buy them. To be fair, I checked out the grevilleas too and they were very poorly represented also, however callistemons appeared to be much more popular but overall, native plants did not appear to sell as well as exotics.

Before we left on the trip I decided to put all the ungerminated seeds in their 1" pots (arranged in icecream containers, nine pots to each one) out in the open and see if the winter sun would help at all. These were seeds sown many weeks before and showing no signs of life at all, so I had nothing to lose.

While we were away, Melbourne had a run of very severe frosts so I was amazed to find that in spite of the cold, fourteen germinated and one had been planted over four months! Five have developed very vigorously, better than under normal conditions. Seedlings potted on in a mixture of 50% coarse sand and garden soil (no humus added) up to 9 cm high survived without loss, but the 12 month old seedlings potted on in a much richer mixture suffered severely. Out of approximately 90 plants I salvaged about 20, however since then a few have put out new shoots and one has sent up new growth from a lignotuber. Older plants were quite unaffected by the frost.

Rare and Endangered Species. The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service have issued a booklet covering this subject and I believe 17 hakeas are listed. In most cases the species are well represented in numbers of plants but if calamity should befall them two years running as in the event of bushfires, there is real danger that those plant communities would perish. The booklets are free.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Mr. F.J.C. Rogers, Horsham 3400.
Brian & Leonie James, Panorama 5041.
Geelong Group, S.G.A.P.

Mr. W. Cane, Maffra 3860. 2540.
Mr. Ross Lamond, Flora Gardens, Terara

NEWS FROM MEMBERS:

Following on the report on *H. bakerana* last N/L, I gave Frank Berner a small amount of cutting material from my small plant. Frank put the cuttings in on 10th October last year and found them well rooted by the 14th December and later had three plants ready for planting.

Jeff Barr of Balaklava S.A. reports that his hakeas in general are handling the dry conditions well and *H. invaginata* flowered for the first time, a lovely soft pink

Rod Kent at Coober Pedy reports that he has two surviving *H. francisiana* grown from seed in 1979. When planted out these two had protection of an iron fence, the other 14 perished. They grew very slowly and are now about 1' high. One of this pair is growing like a rocket this 'spring', have never seen so much new growth - a great thrill! It appears the young plants are sensitive to heat, cold, wind and if they survive all this, they sit in the ground for about two years before deciding to get a move on. Advise as much protection as possible with young plants to others in similar areas (?). Rod, may your optimistic spirit never waver!

~~David Shiells of Shepparton says that record frosts have killed young plants of *H. clavata* and *H. hookerana*, hares also nipped back *H. clavata*.~~

Bill Cane of Maffra is a foundation member of SGAP and a grower of vast experience, so I was interested in his comments that he has grown many hakeas from cuttings including: *H. saligna*, *purpurea*, *verrucosa*, *eriantha*, *oleifolia*, *myrtoides*, *cucullata*, *sericea*, *petiolaris* and *ruscifolia*. He says "I have had a plant of *H. verrucosa* for thirty-five years. It is clayey soil and is subject to flooding at times but being on a hill the water drains off usually within 24 hours. It flowers regularly each winter and sets a fair number of seed. It flowers for several months and has no noticeable pests. Another plant growing in Maffra in clay on flat country from my plant flowers well. Both plants are about 5-6' high. *H. myrtoides* requires watering in this district to grow and flower well. I have found *H. francisiana* on this block in clay to be subject to collar-rot in years of high rainfall."

SEED BANK

Please send a stamped addressed envelope with requests for seed. Spare seed is welco

Arida - terete leaves 2-3m white fls.	Bucculenta - 2-3m red/pink spike fls.
Commutata - " " 3-4m, small white fls.	Coriacea - 2-3m, pink spike fls.
Cyclocarpa - 1-2m, pink fls.	Eriantha - Graceful, up to 7m, white fls
Elliptica - approx 3m, white fls.	Florulenta - 2m., white fls. Q.
Gibbosa - terete fol., white fls. 1-2m.	Laurina - up to 3m. pink fls., weeping fo
Leucoptera - up to 3m, cream fls.	Macraeana - large shrub, white fls.
Minyma - 1-2m, cream loose spike fls.	Muellerana - 1-3m rounded shrub, white fl
Multilineata - 3-7m, pink spike fls.	Nitida - Toothed fol., white fls., tall/bu
Nodosa - terete fol., sm. yellow fls, 2m.	Petiolaris - up to 5m, mauve pincushion f
Purpurea - terete divided fol., 2m. red fls.	Pycnoneura - up to 3m, cream/mauve "
Salicifolia - tall shrub, white fls.	Scoparia - 2-3m, sulcate fol., cream fls.
Smilacifolia - up to 2m, cream fls.	Trifurcata -terete divided fol., white fl
Ulicina - up to 3m, flat fol., white fls.	Undulata - 1-3m, cream fls., ovate fol.
Varia - toothed fol., large shrub, white "	

HAZEL BLACKNEY

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