HIBBERTIA STUDY GROUP

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Hello to members and groups, here's wishing you success in your gardens during the coming season. Now that spring is in the air with the many wildflowers creating a kaleidscope of colour, prominent, amongst them numerous acacias and hibbertias, which have been a cheerful sight along our road verges during the latter part of winter, it reminds me another Newsletter is due.

Over the past few years I have had numerous requests for cuttings. I have sent and received cuttings to and from several members but find it has limitations to the amount and variety I can send, I have also sent addresses of members to other members but this method has not worked satisfactorily. In an endeavour to improve this system I would like all those interested to let me know what cuttings they have, and what species they require, this can be put into the Newsletter and direct exchange of cuttings can take place.

Another comment has been that there appears to be some confusion between H. Procumbens and H. Pedunculata which members have obtained from nurseries. I hope the descriptions in Newsletter will be of some assistance, though it must be remembered that many hibbertias vary in form from area to area so there may be some small variation. H. Procumbens had previously been described in Newsletter No. 9 but is repeated for new members and groups.

The following comments are from members on various Hibbertias they are growing.

PAT SHAW OF MACGREGOR, QUEENSLAND

H. Scandens
Is very rampant in our sand loam and flowers non stop.

H. Longifolia
This plant is growing in a built-up garden bed, flowers freely with very large beautiful flowers. Two friends are growing H. Longifolia very successfully one plant 30cm high is superb when in flower, growing on sandstone. The other plant is growing on red volcanic soil north of Brisbane and flowers nearly all year round.

H. Stellaris
Grew quite well in the garden and a large pot for 2 years, neither flowered very well, producing only a few flowers, both have died.

H. Serpyllifolia
An excellent prostrate plant for landscaping, growing best on mounds, have 6 plants, the 3 on mounds looking the best, expect a mass of flowers very soon.

DON LEVERSHA OF STRATHYFIELDSAYE, VICTORIA

H. Cistiflora
A very small plant purchased in September 1984 in a 7cm pot in a sandy soil mix. This plant was repotted into a sand and sawdust mix in April 1985, has made growth being 10 x 8cm with many buds.

H. Empetrifolia
Purchased May 1984 in a 15cm pot, repotted into a 20m pot September 1984 in sand sawdust mix. This plant died during the heat wave in January 1985. I have had over 50% strike with cuttings, but found it difficult to maintain in pots during summer.

H. Excutiacies
Grows naturally on my property. I have had good success with cuttings taken in spring of good new red growth, and have several in pots at the present time.

H. Humifusa
This plant was purchased in April 1985 in a 15cm pot in a pine mix, but so far has made very little growth. Cuttings taken in May produced an 80% success rated and have recently been potted on, it appears easy to propogate.

H. Longifolia
Purchased in April 1985, and produced some blooms in May and June and will flower shortly. I potted this plant from a 15cm pot to a 30cm ceramic container in July in a commercial pine mix with sand and osmocote added. This plant is kept under the verandah as I fear it could be frost tender, plant is at present 35cm x 35cm.

H. Microphylla
A plant purchased in October 1983 in a 13cm pot in sand sawdust mix. Potted into a 20cm pot in January 1984 and doubled its size in a short time. It produced a flush of bloom from July to October but was set back by heat wave in January 1985, becoming quite sparse. H. Microphylla has recovered to be 45cm diameter and should soon flower. A very attractive plant which has proved to be easy to propogate with almost 100% strike rate.

Propogation is done in a glass house with no heat, but cuttings are misted twice a day during summer. The propogation mix is 4 parts sand 1 part peat, no rooting hormones are used.

My present potting mix is 5 parts sand 3 parts well rotted sawdust, with a small amount of lime and trace elements, with 6 handfuls of osmocote to a barrow load. I have found that for most hibbertias in pots their survival is best under 70% shade cloth during summer. They are watered twice a day because system is linked to glasshouse.

Don also mentions that January and February are the most vulnerable periods for the plants to be affected by heat.

JOHN KNIGHT OF WARRANWOOD, VICTORIA

H. Humifusa

Of those planted this last year, H. Humifusa, a prostrate plant from the grampians, has done well in varying situations. I planted out 6 plants, which were well established in 15cm pots. 2 were placed in a bed of almost pure white sand, in light shade. They have grown to about 40cm across, flowering heavily during spring and summer. No suckering or layering has occurred. The others were placed in a raised bed of clay loam with some humus material and gypsum added, 2 in full sun and 2 in light shade. All performed equally well, now about 30cm across. It appears this delightful plant will prove quite hardy in any well drained soil, but performs better if some water is given during the summer. Propogation by cuttings is quite reliable at most times of the year.

H. Verrucosa

Has not been so easy, the plants were put in from forestry tubes 15cm x 5cm. Although well established the plants have struggled and very little growth made. Surprisingly both plants put into the sand bed died during summer, may be the bed remained dry too long. Those put in clay beds still look quite healthy, and possibly this spring will begin to grow away, as there are a number of lateral buds developing.

H. Microphylla

Appears to like some summer watering. I have a number of small plants, 30cm x 30cm, doing well both in full sun and semi-shade. They kept growing over summer, the plants produced massed flowers around March - April and each plant is still flowering now (September). Yellowing of foliage occurred in hottest months but has not affected their vigour. Some plants are over three years old and still very healthy.

HIBBERTIA DESCRIPTIONS

H. Pedunculata

A mainly prostrate shrub with linear leaves up to 10mm long and 1 to 4mm wide. The flowers are on peduncles longer than the leaves, and are up to 25mm in diameter, sepals are 6mm long with fine hairs. The petals are obovate, 6 to 7mm long. There are some 20 stamens surrounding the 3 hairy carpels.

H. Procumbens

A small woody prostrate plant with slender branches up to 30cm. The leaves are linear being flat or slightly grooved on the upper surface, with pointed tips 15mm long and 1.5mm wide, glabrous or with fine scattered hairs. The flowers are 25mm diameter on terminal stems on short lateral branches. The sepals are oblong to ovate 10mm long and glabrous, with obovate petals, there are 20 to 25 stamens in 4 groups around the 4 or 5 carpels.

B. DIXON