

HIBBERTIA STUDY GROUP

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Though news is somewhat scarce I will put together the little I have before tripping off to the Eastern States for a couple of months during September - October. I hope during my trip through South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and Kangaroo Island to see and photograph some of the numerous Hibbertias growing in those areas.

Continuing on from the last newsletter are some extracts from members' letters which I hope are of some interest.

Allan Foster - Warners Bay, N.S.W. - First of all a report on the cuttings you sent me last May. Hibbertias, Cuneiformis and Serrata both struck, conditions were sand 75%, peat 25%, bottom heat and automatic mist (operating on light heat) giving a 50% strike. A word about the automatic mist system, it seemed to be operating at too frequent an interval, this may have led to fungal rot in the other species, namely H. Grossulariifolia, H. Cunninghamii and H. Hypericoides.

Barbara Buchanan - Kallista, Victoria - A point I noticed when trying to dig up plants on my property at Myrabee even what looked like seedlings seemed to come from deep underground roots, so seeds are probably not so important in the wild. Another observation that I had from my Myrabee experience is that several plants growing along the drive get cut regularly when the grass is cut early summer and come up year after year smiling, and covered in flowers. I have also noticed that stock do not seem to graze on Hibbertias much, other wildflowers disappear but Hibbertias seem to survive. I have also noticed that on my brothers property at Margaret River in W.A. where about 10 large clumps of H. Cuneiformis thrive amongst the dairy cattle.

In regard to the points made by Barbara I have also noticed that in areas that have been cleared or burnt that what appears to be seedling come from large and old rootstock, Hibbertias that fall into this category are H. Amplexicaulis, H. Cunninghamii and H. Hypericoides. I have also noticed that Hibbertias Hypericoides, Sub-vaginata and Vaginata seem to survive the grazing habits of cattle and horses on numerous properties along the coastal plains south of Perth, and indeed seem to be much bigger than those in the adjoining bushland and wonder whether fertilisers used by farmers are helpful to Hibbertias. Another observation is that whilst many other species growing with Hibbertias are attacked by various types of insects Hibbertias seem to escape their attention. I would like members' comments on this of Hibbertias growing in their area.

Jenny West - Balliang East, Victoria - Last year when my dry area garden was finally beginning to look really established we received a considerable amount of rain though not excessive for the winter, but in November and December it rained so much that my soil became saturated, the heaviest for the 8 years, we have been here. Needless to say I had many losses amongst the plants in my garden. Hibbertias fared extremely well, and as the garden is becoming more established I am finding spots with a bit of protection from the strong winds and sun. This seems to suit many Hibbertias especially the large leafed species such as *H. Bracteosa* and *H. Perfoliata* which I have in the ground. The toughest I have here is *H. Riparia*, although not as spectacular as some, has proved very happy during the dry years. Two plants one in the sun and one in shade for most of the day were awash with flowers during November and December, and whilst other species died *H. Riparia* flourished. *H. Procumbens* is also an excellent tough plant for heavy soils wet or dry, and it flowers for many months, I find it to be an excellent plant for a border or rockery.

Don Leversha - Strathfieldsaye, Victoria - Sent a description of *H. Exutiacies* which grows in his area.

H. Exutiacies is found in dry open forests of Victoria and South Australia, grows up to 10cm high by 30cm wide. It is a loose intricately branched mesh of stiff stems with reddish new growth, and very narrow spreading needle pointed glabrous leaves to 8mm long by 1mm wide. Small stalkless bright yellow flowers developing in leaf axis in October have details about 8mm long. The sepals are glabrous 5 to 6mm long and stamens 4 to one side of the 2 carpels.

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