

HIBBERTIA STUDY GROUP

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In our last newsletter I mentioned the various mixes used by members in propagating Hibbertias, and the various species being propagated. The following notes are from members about their success and failures in growing Hibbertias in varying soils and conditions. As can be seen the majority of information is from Victoria, but feel that it should be of value and interest to all members. To all members, particularly in other states I would appreciate similar comments on the various species you are growing.

HIBBERTIA ASPERA

ANNE KERR - VICTORIA - Original soil is of true clay, the garden is terraced and has been built up with sandy loam giving good drainage. Anne found growth of Hibbertia Aspera slow for first two years, plant then made fast growth reaching 90cm high and 1.5m wide, forming good ground cover. Flowers are some what sparse but are of good colour and size.

MARION SIMMONDS - TASMANIA - Marion has several Hibbertia Asperas, one of which was planted in 1969 in grey loam, it has reached 60cm by 1m. Plants receive occasional fertilising with blood and bone, and occasional watering in hot weather. It would appear from this that Hibbertia Aspera has a long life under cultivation.

ROSS MACDONALD - VICTORIA - Ross has tried seeds of Hibbertia Aspera with very little success, but finds seeds germinate naturally around plants in his garden.

HIBBERTIA AMPLEXICAULIS

JOHN KNIGHT - VICTORIA - Johns garden was mudstone and shale close to the surface, with a minimal covering of heavy clay loam. The garden beds were built up to a depth of 30cm with heavy clay loam mixed with compost to help keep it open. John planted 3 plants in natural ground in April 1980, all died the following summer. A plant placed in composted bed in full sun proved to be semi-vigorous, with prolific flowering. The plant in semi-shade in raised beds was trained as a climber, growth being luxuriant but flowers fewer.

I have numerous Hibbertia amplexicaulis and find that they favour semi-shade conditions, plants in full sun generally die after a year or two. My soil is loose grey sand, but for Hibbertia Amplexicaulis I enrich it with peat for water retention, and water during summer with trickle irrigation. I also add an occasional teaspoon of osmocote pellets. Flowering though not prolific commences in august continuing for several months. I have also found it to be an ideal pot plant. In its natural habitat Hibbertia Amplexicaulis can be found in deep shade, so should be a good subject for those shaded areas we all have.

HIBBERTIA EMPETRIFOLIA

JOHN KNIGHT - John tried 3 in natural ground, after 12 months 2 were surviving but growth was slow. Plants in full sun in composted beds made quick growth, in 18 months developed into large shrubs 1m by 2.5m.

ROSS MACDONALD - Ross also finds *Hibbertia Empetrifolia* a quick growing plant, and finds cutting it back quite severely produces marvellous results. Ross has also seen this plant used as a climber, presenting a fantastic sight when in flower.

ANNE KERR - Anne planted one in 1975 in a position where it receives the afternoon sun, growth was quite good and by 1980 the plant was 1.2m by 1.8m. Flowering in 1976 and 1977 was good, whilst 1978 and 1979 flowering was quite spectacular.

It would appear that *Hibbertia Empetrifolia* is quite a hardy long lived and showy plant that should be seen more often in gardens. *Hibbertia Empetrifolia* can be propagated by cuttings with reasonable success, Ross favours new growth produced during winter as the best cutting material.

The following are descriptions of *hibbertias* from areas of varied climatic conditons in Australia.

HIBBERTIA BRACTEOSA - W.A.

A shrub up to 1m tall with erect slightly compressed, 4 sided stems. Leaves rounded, alternate up to 5cm long and 5cm across, folded, closely clasping the stem. The broad sessile leaves having rounded projections at the base. The flowers solitary in leaf axils, 3cm across, slender stems 2 to 3cm long. Petals are broad, and barely lobed, with a solitary, fairly narrow bracteole, 6mm long at the base of each flower. There are numerous stamens surrounding 5 ovaries, with a few sterile stamens outside the fertile ones.

Hibbertia Bracteosa is found in the porongurups near Albany, growing in crevices, or moss cushions on granite mountain slopes. Flowering period is normally September to November.

Hibbertia Bracteosa is on a list of plants gazzetted as rare and endangered flora of W.A.

HIBBERTIA GLABERRIMA - N.T. S.A.

A glabrous spreading shrub to 50cm tall. Leaves narrow oblong to very narrow elliptic, recurved and mostly 30 to 100mm by 2 to 10mm. Flowers solitary 2 to 3cm diameter, on peduncles 1 to 3cm long. Petals orbicular to broad-elliptic, slightly longer than the sepals. Stamens numerous with a few staminodia outside carpels.

Hibbertia Glaberrima is found in central south of the Northern Territory and north west of South Australia, usually on rocky hillsides.

HIBBERTIA PROCUMBENS - VIC. TAS.

A small woody plant, prostrate, with slender branches spreading up to 30cm. Leaves linear or flat, or slightly grooved on the upper surface, acute apex to 15mm in length, 0.5mm to 1.5mm wide. Flowers numerous, solitary, terminating short lateral branches, opening widely to about 2.5mm in diameter. Stamens 20 to 25 in four groups around the 4 to 5 carpels. Quite common in heaths in Tasmania, and widespread in hilly areas in Victoria. Suitable for light to medium, well drained soils in open situation.

I would like to welcome 2 new members to the group.
N.J. Bone, 21 Vickers Street, KIALLA, VICTORIA 3631
Mr Gary Johnston, P.O. Box 246, STRAWBERRY HILLS, N.S.W. 2012

Interestingly enough Garry informs me he has had considerable success over a long period propagating *Hibbertia Scandens* from seed.

A reminder that I have a set of slides of various West Australian *Hibbertia*'s with notes about each plant for any group who feel they can be used for a fill in at meeting's or general viewing.

Bernie Dixon