

HFNC Silver Banksia project at Yatchaw – 2021 report

Rod Bird

Background

The historical background to the presence and abundance of this species, and *Allocasuarina verticillata* and *Bursaria spinosa*, can be found in a report by Rod Bird (May 2020) entitled ‘*Silver Banksia, Sweet Bursaria and Drooping Sheoak on the basalt plains and junctions with other land systems*’ (see HFNC website).

In 2016 a group of concerned environmentally aware landholders and others formed the *Friends of the Forgotten Woodlands* – their objective was the restoration of Silver Banksia, Sweet Bursaria and Drooping Sheoak on the plains. The group has been supported by GHCMA, Corangamite CMA, Arthur Rylah Institute and other organizations. The AGM report for 2020 states that some 9,350 banksias have been planted on experimental sites (34 seed production areas), with another 10,250 on other sites.

In 2020, HFNC had produced a surplus of seedlings from collections of seed from Yatchaw and the Pierrepont Rail Reserve (the main purpose had been to grow seedlings for Kanawalla Rail Reserve). We decided to plant these on the Yatchaw site. That was done on 14 Oct. 2020 by RB and PH, with the assistance of Bill Weatherly from FoFW. We planted 153 Silver Banksia in the area of main remnant (near the Dundas Sign). These comprised 90 seedlings from Yatchaw (30 from RB and 60 from Arborline) and 63 from Pierrepont (42 from RB and 21 from Arborline). All the trees came from seed collected by RB (each of the two collections comprised mixed seed from at least 10 trees). Details of that work – and further information on FoFW – is available in the HFNC report for 2020.

Activity in 2021

On Sept. 2021 RB spent 3 hrs weeding 145 Silver Banksia trees of Yatchaw and Pierrepont provenance that were planted in 2020. Around each tree guard a small perimeter (0.5 m radius) of grass was sprayed to reduce competition from Phalaris. About 30 L of herbicide spray was used.

Survival has been good with only 5 trees dead from the planting in 2020. On either side of our planting, which was in the vicinity of the Dundas Shire conservation sign, the FoFW team had in 2020 planted 720 Silver Banksia from other sources. These, too, had mostly survived.

In 2021 it is expected that the banksias will have grown out of their small guards and browsing from Black Wallabies can be expected. We shall have to provide some protection for at least some of the trees that we planted.