



**NATIVE SPECIES
RECOMMENDED
FOR
PLANTING
AS
BUSHTUCKER**

**NOOSA & DISTRICT LANDCARE GROUP
STATION STREET, POMONA
PH: 5485 2468**

ACMENA INGENS	Red apple
ACMENA SMITHII	Creek lilly pillly
ACRONYCHIA WILCOXIANA	Silver aspen
ALECTRYON TOMENTOSA	Hairy alectryon
ALPINIA CAERULEA	Native ginger
APHANANTHE PHILIPPINENSIS	Rough-leaved elm
ARAUCARIA BIDWILLII	Bunya pine
AUSTROMYRTUS DULCIS	Midyim
AUSTROMYRTUS HILLII	Scaly myrtle
BACKHOUSIA CITRIODORA	Lemon scented myrtle
BRACHYCHITON ACERIFOLIUS	Flame tree
CAPPARIS ARBOREA	Bush caper
CAPPARIS SARMENTOSA	Scrambling caper
CARISSA OVATA	Native currant
CISSUS ANTARCTICA	Native grape
CITRUS AUSTRALIS	Round Lime
DAVIDSONIA PRURIENS	Davidson's plum
DIANELLA CONGESTA	Flax Lily
DIPLOGLOTTIS AUSTRALIS	Native tamarind
DIPLOGLOTTIS CAMPBELLII	Small leaf tamarind
DRYPETES DEPLANCHEI	Yellow tulip
ELAEOCARPUS GRANDIS	Blue quandong
EUGENIA REINWARDTIANA	Beach Cherry
EUPOMATIA LAURINA	Bolwarra
EXOCARPUS CUPPRESSIFORMIS	Cherry ballart
EXOCARPUS LATIFOLIUS	Native cherry
FICUS CORONATA/FRASERI	Sandpaper figs
FICUS MACROPHYLLA	Moreton bay fig
GAHNIA ASPERA	Sawsedge
LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA	Matrush
MACADAMIA INTEGRIFOLIA	Queensland nut
MACADAMIA TETRAPHYLLA	Bopple nut
MACLURA COCHINCHINENSIS	Cockspur Thorn
MELODORUM LEICHHARDTII	Zig-zag, vine
MISCHARYTERA LAUTERERANA	Corduroy tamarind
PITTOSPORUM MULTIFLORUM	Orange thorn
PITTOSPORUM SPINESCENS	Native lime
PLANCHONELLA AUSTRALIS	Black apple
PLEIOGYNIUM TIMORENSE	Burdekin plum
PODOCARPUS ELATUS	Brown pine
STERCULIA QUADRIFIDA	Peanut tree
SYZYGIUM AUSTRALE	Brush cherry
SYZYGIUM LUEHMANNII	Riberry
SYZYGIUM MOOREI	Rose apple
SYZYGIUM OLEOSUM	Blue lilly pillly

Australian native plants used as - *Bush tucker food* -

ACACIAS – The gum of Australian species when soaked in water tends to form a jelly-like substance, which can be eaten. However, depending on the amount of tannins in the gum it may be too bitter and astringent for most palates. Pale amber gums are usually more pleasant than those that are a darker red-brown colour.

Acacia oshanesii – Irish Wattle; The unmistakable scent of the pollen can be taken advantage of in fritters or for a truly Australian snack, pikelets. The flowers are stripped from the stem, mixed in a light batter and fried; said to be very pleasant to eat and also having a distinct flavour.

Acmena smithii – Creek lilly-pilly; Acmena hemilampra – Broad Leaved lilly-pilly; Acmena ingens – Red Apple; These common trees of coastal rainforests and many backyard gardens are widely known as bush tucker. However, although the fruits are highly alluring and extremely popular with the local wildlife (possums in particular) their taste is drying and not very palatable.

Acronychia wilcoxiana – Silver Aspen; Rainforest species with cream or white four lobed fruits which are sour and aromatic.

Acrotriche aggregata – Tall Groundberry; A shrub of sandy infertile soils, often found in dry scrub and woodlands. Produces bright red, shiny fruits along the branches that ripen unpredictably. These fruits are edible but tasteless.

Alectryon tomentosus – Hairy Alectryon; A pinnate leaved species of rainforests with a lobed fruit around 7mm wide. When mature the upper part of the fruit wall falls off exposing jet-black seeds enveloped in a red fleshy jacket. The jacket is crisp and pleasant to eat.

Alpinia Caerulea – Native Ginger; A cane-like shrub with large glossy leaves, common in rainforests. Produces bright blue grape-sized fruits, which when cracked open reveal a mass of dark seeds surrounded by a white pulp which is similar in taste to ginger. The whole fruit (minus the outer coating) is placed in the mouth and sucked before spitting out the seeds. Native ginger was so popular with aboriginals that it is said that the seeds spat out along the trails would mark the trails for future use.

Aphananthe Philippinensis – Rough-leaved Elm; A large ornamental rainforest tree, fairly slow growing, which produces a fruit with a blackish, fleshy drupe ripening from October to January. Fruit is said to taste of stewed apples.

Arucaria bidwillii – Bunya Pine; This well known pine of South-East Queensland is renowned for its tasty nuts. Aborigines came from far and wide for the 'bunya feast' where the huge cones (30cm in diameter) were knocked down from the trees by climbers who would cut toe holds into the huge trees. The seeds were eaten raw or roasted and are delicious when boiled.

Arytera lautereriana – Corduroy Tamarind; An attractive tree of rainforests which has slender pinnate leaves and reddish three-lobed fruits with pale yellow pulp. The pulp is edible and pleasantly tangy in flavour.

Austromyrtus dulcis – Midyim; A hardy 1 metre shrub with attractive pink-tipped foliage that grows prolifically in coastal areas. The small whitish/grey fruits have been described as the best of all bush tuckers and were collected in huge quantities by coastal aboriginal tribes. Their soft pulp is soft and sweet and the seeds are so small that the whole fruit can be eaten with pleasure.

Austromyrtus hillii – Scaly Myrtle; Small rainforest tree which has black edible fruits.

Babingtonia similis – Twiggy Myrtle; Common shrub found near creeks and rivers. The leaves are used to produce a pleasant tasting tea with a good aroma.

Backhousia citriodora – Lemon Scented Myrtle; The exquisitely fresh lemon-scented leaves of this small rainforest tree have made it a very popular bush tucker food. The leaves make a pleasant tasting and calming tea and are also harvested for use in Asian cooking.

Banksia integrifolia – Coastal Banksia; An easily recognizable shrub of coastal areas with its distinct flowers and unusual seed pods. The pollen laden flowers were either sucked or soaked in water allowing for fermentation.

Blechnum indicum – Bungwall Fern; A large fern of coastal swampy areas, which produces long black rhizomes. An important food source of many coastal tribes the rhizomes were dug out, roasted, and then bruised before eating with a meat dish or ground and dried to be used in biscuits. As a survival food the starchy rhizomes can also be eaten raw.

Brachychiton acerifolium – *Flame Tree*; A tree that has been widely cultivated for its unique foliage. The seeds are edible and have a nutty flavour.

Brachychiton populneus – *Kurrajong*; Usually found in drier areas. Leaves tend to be 3 or 5 lobed with a weeping form. The tree produces red flowers, which are followed by a brown leathery pod. The pods split to reveal a group of seeds, which are best removed with a stick due to the irritating hairs. The seed is quite nutritious and nutty in flavour.

Canavalia rosea – *Beach Bean*; A vigorous creeper found along beach dunes. Can be identified by its large leaves, lilac pea flowers, and large (8-14cm long) bean pods. When raw the beans are poisonous causing vomiting, however after roasting the big seeds are quite tasty. The first Englishmen to give the beans a go was Captain Cook in 1770 and described the beans as “not to be despised.” Joseph Banks was next with “a kind of beans, very bad”. Also used by Ludwig Leichhardt to make a coffee substitute.

Capparis arborea – *Native Caper* Capparis sarmentosa – *Scrambling Caper*; Shrubs or scrambling climbers of coastal rainforests. Capparis species are hook climbers with sharp spines covering young plants, however flowering branches are spineless. The white petals of the flower are distinctive, and fruit when mature, are roughly 7cm across and orange-yellow in colour. The pulp of the fruit, which ripens from May to July, is sweet and tasty.

Carissa ovata – *Currant Bush*; Remarkable for its ability to grow in a wide range of conditions from mangrove fringes to scrub and arid areas. Produces oval brownish black fruits which are pleasantly sweet and are similar to juicy dates.

Carpobrotus glaucescens – *Pigface*; A fleshy common creeper of coastal sandy areas with purple flowers and purplish-red fruits. The fruits have a unique but enjoyable taste, which has been described as similar to salty strawberries. The leaves of the plant were also used with meat as a salt substitute.

Citrus australis, australasica – *Round lime, Finger Lime*; These small trees of the rainforests are some of the best bush tuckers going round. Each species has small round leaves and spines along the stem. The fruits are green and fairly small compared to the commercial variety of lime; however the taste is just as good. Being deliciously sweet and tangy the fruits are ideal for use in drinks or marmalade.

Cyathea sp, Dicksonia sp – *Tree-ferns*; “*In passing through a woody hollow, we saw many of the tree ferns, with the upper portion of the trunk split, and one half turned back. This had evidently been done by the Aborigines, to obtain the heart for food, but how this process was effected, I could not discover; it must certainly have required considerable skill.*”. Missionary James Backhouse 1843.

Davidsonia pruriens – *Davidson's Plum*; The purple egg-shaped fruit of this tree ripens in autumn. It has a very tangy flavour and is delicious stewed with sugar. It also makes an excellent jam and a good wine.

Dianella congesta – *Flax Lily*; The shiny, dark blue berries are edible. Aborigines ate the roots after pounding and roasting on hot rocks.

Dioscorea transverse – *Rainforest Long Yam*; A vine of the east coast rainforests. The vine produces long thin tubers, which can be quite deep underground (up to 50cm). These tubers were either eaten raw or cooked and boiled and are said to have a similar flavour to potato.

Diploglottis australis – *Native Tamarind*; Its impressive large leathery leaves make this an easily identifiable rainforest tree. It produces three-lobed fruits which each contain a yellow-orange jelly like pulp. The pulp is one of the best bush tuckers available and has a pleasant sour taste. Contains high amounts of vitamin C and is ideal for cool drinks and jams.

Diploglottis campbellii – *Small-leaf Tamarind*; This attractive medium sized rainforest tree is now on the rare and endangered list as only a handful exist in the wild. The juicy red fruit, although very acid, is pleasant to eat or use in drinks or jams.

Elaeocarpus grandis – *Blue Quandong*; A tall handsome rainforest tree which produces bright blue walnut-sized fruit March till June. Fruit stones were used for necklaces and earrings. The aboriginal people made an edible paste from the fruits.

Eleocharis dulcis – *Edible Spike Rush* Leichhardt highly regarded this bush tucker as the best he had tasted. The leafless rush with cylindrical stems up to one metre high and underground tubers was highly prized by aborigines for their sweet taste. The underground tubers were dug up and eaten either raw or cooked, and often ground down to use as a flour.

Eugenia reinwardtiana – *Beach Cherry*; The bright red fruit of this small shrub ripens between August and March and produces a sweet, succulent fruit.

Eupomatia laurina – *Native Guava*; Described by botanists as being one of the world's most primitive species due to its strange flower structure. The round fruits of this small rainforest tree are sweet and pleasant to eat and are similar to the taste of a guava.

Exocarpos cupressiformis – *Cherry Ballart, Native Cherry*; **Exocarpos latifolius**–*Broad-leaved Native Cherry*; Small semi-parasitic shrubs 2-8m with leaves reduced to minute scales. Aborigines ate the fruit, a red, egg-shaped berry, when ripe. The stalk is sweet and palatable when deep red.

Ficus coronata – *Sandpaper Fig*, **Ficus fraserii**–*White Sandpaper Fig*; These two species are difficult to distinguish between as their growth forms are very similar. Both are found along creeks and in rainforest and were used as sandpaper as the leaves are extremely coarse. The fruit are varying in taste from very similar to that of a domestic fig to being very dry and insipid.

Ficus macrophylla – *Moreton Bay Fig*, **Ficus watkinsiana**–*Strangler Fig*; Both these species of fig are well known for their huge size and popularity in large parks and gardens. Both produce large purplish fruits, which are quite sweet and succulent and are relatively pleasant despite the mass of gritty seeds.

Ficus rubiginosa – *Small Leaved Rock Fig*; This species has an unusual distribution, being found sporadically near Broome, Ayres Rock, The Kimberley, Far North Qld, and the Moreton Bay region. It is a huge tree found on rocky outcrops in coastal rainforest, which produces a fruit which is high in calcium and potassium. So important to desert Aboriginal tribes that anyone harming the plant could be killed.

Gahnia aspera - *Saw Sedge*; This common grass-like sedge grows 40 to 80cm tall and is found in diverse situations from Southern NSW to Nth Qld. The fruit is a hard, shiny, red-brown nut that the Aborigines pounded into flour.

Lepironia articulate – *Grey Sedge*; This common sedge of coastal areas is easily recognised by its large size and cylindrical green-grey leaf stems. The underground stems were reportedly eaten.

Leucopogon parviflorus – *Coast Beard Heath*; Shrub of coastal dunes and heaths. Has small leaves, 1-3cm long and tiny five-petaled flowers. The fruit, which forms in clusters along the stem, is cream in colour and has pleasant lemon taste.

Lomandra hystrix – *Mat rush*, **Lomandra longifolia** *Spiny mat rush*; The white soft base of the leaves of these species can be eaten.

Macadamia integrifolia – *Queensland Nut*; This is the best known and most widely planted of all Australian food plants. Now grown in commercial plantings in Northern NSW and S.E. Qld. Aborigines also relished the sweet oily nuts.

Macadamia tetraphylla – *Bopple Nut*; The nut from this tree has been described as the world's finest-flavoured yet *Macadamia integrifolia* (*Queensland Nut*) still dominates in the commercial growing of the nuts. This is because *M. tetraphylla* has a higher sugar content which leads to the browning of the kernels when roasted.

Maclura cochinchinensis – *Cockspur Thorn*; This spiny vine throws out long arched stems of new growth but could be hedged. The edible fleshy yellow-orange fruits are juicy, pleasant and sweet and the plant may live hundreds of years.

Melastoma affine – *Blue Tongue* Very similar in appearance to the popular *Tibouchina* with its dark purple/pink flowers and 3 veined leaves. The fruits are brown scaly capsules which when ripe burst open to reveal a dark purple fleshy pulp. The pulp is pleasantly sweet and popular with kids as it stains the mouth blue.

Melodorum Leichhardtii - *Zig-zag vine*; The aborigines ate the ripe fruit from this easily grown scrambling vine straight off the forest floor. The orange fleshy fruit ripens from January to March and has a pleasant acidic taste.

Mischarytera lautereriana – *Corduroy Tamarind*; An attractive medium sized rainforest tree. The greenish-yellow fruits contain a seed completely enclosed in a juicy clear orange aril. This tastes delicious for those who like tartness.

Myoporum – *Boobialla*; The shiny purplish fruits of this shrub or tree of coastal areas taste a combination of bitter and salty sweet.

Nymphaea – *Waterlily*; These plants with their large round green floating leaves and distinct white flowers are common throughout eastern Queensland. Almost every part of the lily was used by the Aborigines as a food source including the tubers and the nectar of the flowers which when overeaten can cause headaches.

Pandanus peduncularis – *Screw Pine*; High in fats and protein the pandanus made up a vital part of the aboriginal diet. These distinctive trees of coastal areas have large orange seeds that if left uncooked are poisonous, causing sore lips, blistered tongue and as Ludwig Leichhardt found out "violent diarrhea." After a tedious process to remove the toxins the taste is described as similar to sweetened baked potato.

Pittosporum multiflorum, spinescens – *Orange Thorn, Native Lime*; Spiny understory shrubs to 2 metres. The hard orange berries ripen from May to July. They were eaten by the aborigines and are said to have an average flavour with a tang similar to an orange.

Planchonella australis – Black Apple; Aborigines ate the large, juicy purple-black fruit which ripens during late spring and summer. The fruits are often used to make a jelly.

Pleiogynium timorense – Burdekin Plum; A tree found north from Gympie, the Burdekin Plum is often found in rainforest gullies and on rocky hillsides. The fruit is large and similar in form to a plum. That's where the similarity ends however with the fruit being unpalatable unless left to soften for a few days.

Podocarpus elatus – Brown Pine; Large specimens are uncommonⁱⁿ the wild as they were widely harvested for their high quality timber. They produce firm round seed on a swollen fleshy base which is blue-black and plum-like. The flesh is rather bland but still pleasant with its jelly like texture.

Rebus fraxinifolius – Queensland Raspberry; A small shrub of rainforest edges with a fruit that resembles a raspberry crossed with a strawberry. The fruit is drier than the cultivated variety but still quite pleasant. The taste is described as excellent when made into a jam.

Sambucus – Native Elderberries; Resembles the garden variety of Elderberry. The shiny 3-6mm creamy-yellow fruits form in dense, large clusters. The fruits are juicy and are a pleasantly sweet flavour.

Solanum aviculare – Kangaroo Apple; A soft-wooded shrub of rainforest margins the kangaroo apple has egg-shaped fruits which change from green to orange when ripening. The pulp of the fruit is sickly-sweet but with a bitter after-taste. Berries must be absolutely ripe to be edible as unripe fruit is said to be poisonous. The unripe berries are used in pharmacy as steroid precursors for the synthesis of contraceptives and corticosteroids.

Sterculia quadrifida – Peanut Tree; Leathery, boat-shaped fruiting capsules ripen in summer splitting open to reveal a beautiful bright red interior containing shiny, black, peanut-sized seeds which have a delicious nutty flavour. Aborigines ate them raw or roasted.

Syzygium australe – Brush Cherry; A small tree of rainforest creeks and scrubs, produces masses of bright pink fruits in summer and autumn. The fruits are spongy and quite juicy and are refreshing in taste. They make a good jam and have been used to make wine.

Syzygium luehmanii – Riberry; The most popular garden variety of the lilly-pillies because of its attractive growth form and the flush of weeping pink new growth. The pear shaped fruits are a dull red and are pleasant eating and a popular ingredient in many wildfood dishes.

Syzygium Moorei – Rose Apple; Now on the rare and endangered plant list this large rainforest tree was called the 'Watermelon Tree' by the early settlers for the colour of its cauliflorous flowers. It bears large white fruit which are juicy though insipid in flavour.

Syzygium oleosum – Blue Lilly-Pilly; This small tree of rainforests can be found along much of the east coast. The foliage has a bronze tinge and produces red-purple fruits which become blue when ripe. The fruits are a decent size and are very juicy making for pleasant eating. Can be used to make jams or jellies.

Tasmania insipida – Brush Pepperbush; Small rainforest shrub that produces clusters of dark purple to whitish berries. The flesh of the fruit is sweet and the seed, which is surprisingly hot, can be crushed and used as pepper.

Triglochin – Water Ribbons; A water plant with long streamer like leaves and a tall yellow-green seed spike that rises above the water. The roots of the plant swell to form tubers (up to 200/plant) and were roasted and pounded to be used as a baby food or for the elderly.

Typha – Bulrush; The stiff, rod-like flower spikes of this aquatic plant can be spotted around creeks or shallow ponds. The new white shoots which pop up from spring to summer can be boiled and are pleasant in taste if not too fibrous. Shoots should be cut while growing horizontally.

Vigna lanceolate – Pencil Yam; A twining legume of dry creek flats and granite country, the pencil yam is regarded as one of the best bush tucker vegetables. The yellow pea-flowers are followed by the green bean pod. The thin taproot is dug up and roasted.

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