

Tasmannia insipida, Tasmannia lanceolata – Pepper Bushes have berries that can be dried and ground for a hot, sharp spice. Their fresh or dried leaves can also add flavour to casseroles (but only for last half hour of cooking and should be removed before serving). Flower buds are a spicy addition to salads.



Viola hederacea – The flowers can be used in salads.

Xanthorrhoea species

– The new leaves and upper stem of Grass Trees can be eaten or the flower spike soaked in water. Removing the pith of the tree will kill it, so this is not recommended.



Plants were also used for myriad medicinal and other purposes by Aboriginal people. Some useful local plants are:

Acacia melanoxylon (Blackwood) bark solution relieves aching joints.

Dodonaea viscosa (Hop-bush) roots soothe toothache

and chewed leaves relieve stings.

Allocasuarina verticillata (Drooping she-oak) leaves can be chewed to ease thirst.

Leptospermum petersonii (Lemon-scented Tea-Tree) Leaves containing citronella repel insects such as mosquitoes and can be soaked to make a tea.

For convenience, try our online store at

www.wariapendi.com.au

Other brochures available

- Creating a Wetland
- Attracting Birds to your Garden
- Cut Flowers & Floral Displays
- Plants for Shady Gardens
- Attracting Butterflies to your Garden
- Plants for Clay Soils
- Plants for Sandy Soils
- Hedging Plants
- Carpet Plants
- Establishing a Windbreak

Need more help?

Consultancy service available.

Ask our staff for a brochure or advice.

Contact us

Located at 33-35 Church Avenue, Colo Vale NSW

Mail: P.O. Box 138, Mittagong 2575

Phone: (02) 4889 4327

Fax: (02) 4889 4092

Website: www.wariapendi.com.au

Email: enquiries@wariapendi.com.au

The information provided in this brochure is only intended as a guide. Some plants or parts of plants are toxic or even deadly, so never eat any part of a plant if you aren't completely sure of its identity or effects. Never eat plants that are growing in an area that may have been sprayed with chemicals or where the water supply may be contaminated. If you are unsure whether a plant is edible, seek professional advice.



Bush Food



Bush-food

Aboriginal people have lived across Australia for thousands of years subsisting on indigenous plants and animals. Their diet was rich and varied, demonstrating a great understanding of their environment. In spite of this long history of human subsistence in Australian environments, few native animals and plants are used in agricultural pursuits today. Unfortunately much of this knowledge has been lost and further research is required.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in bush foods. Some local bush foods are outlined in this brochure and can be grown in local gardens.

Acacia spp. – Many Acacia seeds were staple foods for inland Aboriginal people. Some were eaten green; others were roasted, steamed and ground. Local Wattles with edible seeds include early Black Wattles (*Acacia decurrens*), Gossamer Wattles (*Acacia floribunda*) and Fringe Wattles (*Acacia fimbriata*).



Wattle seeds and Wattle seed flour are now marketed as a bush food with recipes for delicious desserts including wattle crème brûlée and wattle ice cream.

Acacia longifolia – Coastal Wattles have edible seeds that can be roasted or steamed in their green pods. They add a pleasant nutty flavour to pancakes, bread and cakes and can also be used as a coffee substitute.

Austromyrtus species - Midgen or Midyim Berry have small edible berries with a sweet taste.

Baeckea virgata – Leaves can be steeped in water to make an aromatic tea that has a sedative effect.

Backhousia citriodora – Lemon Myrtle leaves have a distinctive lemony flavour and have been used to make essential oils as well as flavouring syrups, preserves, teas and seasonings.

Banksia species – The sweet nectar of Banksia flowers can be obtained by sucking the flower or by soaking the flowers in water to make a sweet drink. The sweet drink of the banksia flower is sometimes mixed with wattle gum. The Aborigines also make a weak form of alcohol, which is called 'bull' or 'bool' from the banksia, leaving the liquid to ferment.

Brachychiton populneus – Kurrajong coffee made from roasted Kurrajong seeds was popular amongst early European settlers and Aborigines ate toasted seeds. Bush foods made from Kurrajong seeds today include flour used in breads, pancakes and muffins and lightly roasted seeds that can be cooked with rice.

Callistemon citrinus – The lemon-scented leaves can be used to make a refreshing tea that can be sweetened by using nectar from the flowers.

Callistemon species – Bottlebrush flowers have a sweet nectar which can either be eaten by sucking on the flowers or by soaking the flowers in water to make a sweet drink.

Davidsonia jerseyana – Davidson's Plum produces edible clusters of sour grape-like purple fruits that can be eaten raw or used to make preserves and other dishes.

Dendrobium species – The starchy stems of Rock Orchids can be roasted and eaten and the flowers can be used to make a spectacular edible garnish.

Dianella caerulea – The blue berries can be eaten. They have a sweet flavour which becomes nutty once the seed is chewed. The roots can be eaten after pounding and roasting.

Doryanthes excelsa – Gymea Lily roots can be harvested, roasted made into a cake. The young flower spikes can be roasted and eaten or the sweet nectar produced by the flowers can be eaten.

Ficus coronata – Creek Sandpaper Figs have rough leaves that were used by Aborigines to polish wooden spears. The fruits are edible when ripe.

Grevillea species – The flowers of most Grevilleas can either be sucked or soaked in water to produce a sweet drink.

Hardenbergia violaceae – The leaves can be steeped to make tea.

Lomandra longifolia – The white bases of the leaves are edible and the flowers and seeds can be eaten, taking care to avoid the spikes.

Melaleuca species – The flowers of Paperbarks produce a sweet nectar which can either be sucked from the flowers or the flowers can be soaked in water to make a sweet drink.

Microcitrus australasia – Finger Limes have cylindrical finger-like fruits full of tiny bead-like crystals with a tangy, sour citrus flavour.

Persoonia linearis – Fruits are edible after they fall to the ground and ripen. Usually the skin and seed are discarded before eating.

Podocarpus elatus – Illawarra Plums have tart 'fruits' (actually the swollen stems of the seeds) which can be eaten fresh when they fall from the tree or used to make jam, chutney, sauces or as a pie filling. They are high in vitamin C.

Prostanthera species – The leaves of the Native Mint Bushes can be used fresh or dried to make an aromatic tea or as a mint substitute in dishes.

Rubus parvifolius – Native raspberry produces small sour berries rich in vitamin C that can be used to make preserves, pies, etc.

Syzygium species, Acmena species – Brush Cherry, Riberry, and Lilly Pilly fruits can be used, with flavours varying from sweet to acid depending on the species. Can be eaten raw or used to make jam.