

## Lambertia Formosa – Mountain Devil

Lambertia is a small genus of about 11 species, all but one of which occur in the south of Western Australia.

Lambertia formosa is the only species in the genus to occur in eastern Australia and is a small to medium shrub, often no more than 1m or so high but sometimes reaching 2m. It has stiff, linear-shaped leaves 0.3mm wide by about 50mm long with a sharp tip. The red, tubular-shaped flowers occur at the ends of the branches in groups of 7, each cluster being about 50mm in length.

Flowering usually occurs in Winter and Spring but some flowers are often present at other times of the year. The flowers contain nectar and are frequented by honey eating birds. After flowering, small, horned seed capsules develop and these give rise to the common name of "Mountain Devil". However, the species is not confined to mountain areas and is commonly seen in coastal heath.

This is a popular plant in cultivation. It requires moist, well drained soils, preferably of a light texture such as sandy loam. It appreciates some protection from full sun but should not be grown in heavy shade. It is tolerant of at least moderate frosts.

### Propagation

Propagation is readily achieved from seed.

**WHEN TO SOW** – in warm areas or in a glass house - at any time. In frost prone areas sow when the danger of frost has passed.

**WHERE TO GROW** – Full sun or part shade in any well-drained soil, but preferably light sandy loam.

**SOWING** – Fill a pot or tray with moist sandy soil, wet thoroughly and compress. Sow seeds thinly on the surface and cover with a thin layer of soil. Keep the soil moist. Cover with clear polythene until germination in about 3-6 weeks.

**CULTIVATION** – Thin the seedlings out if crowded, transplant or pot at 10cm - disturb the roots as little as possible. Water in well and water regularly until established, thereafter as needed. Protect against snails and slugs during germination and seedling stage.