

Hardenbergia violacea

Purple Coral Pea



Growth rate: Fast **Height:** to 0.8m **Width:** to 2m

Natural habitat: Various habitats, from near sea-level to high mountains.

Habit: Attractive, easy care, hardy perennial with a clumping, climbing or prostrate scrambling habit. Ground covering for rockeries, embankments, under trees, in containers or for light screen. Responds to mulching. Green leathery leaves. Purplish flowers July- October. Able to fix nitrogen from the atmosphere.

Growing tips

- Well-drained light clay to sandy soils
- Drought resistant but not frost tolerant
 - Full sun or part shade
 - Avoid over-watering
- Prune severely to rejuvenate old plants

Seed

collection: Oct to late Feb. Seeds released very soon after maturity.

Propagation: From scarified seed or cuttings.

Wildlife: Highly valued for attracting wildlife, especially nectar from mid-winter when other food sources are scarce.

Insects/Pollinators: Rich in nectar and pollen for native bees, especially blue-banded and leafcutter bees. Moths, beetles, hoverflies and wasps attracted to flowers. Host plant for common grass blue butterfly and painted apple moth.

Nectar-feeding birds: honeyeaters- White-Plumed, New Holland, Eastern Spinebills.

Seed-eating birds: including Bronze-winged pigeons feed on seeds.

Insect-eating birds: wrens, fantails, thornbills.

Shelter/nesting: Safe refuge and shelter for small birds. Dense shady foliage provides a cool, humid micro-climate that attracts frogs. Foliage good refuge for small lizards.

Calocephalus citreus

Lemon Beauty Heads



Growth rate: moderate **Height:** to 50cm **Width:** to 1m

Habitat: Grasslands, open woodlands, dry forests, low lying herb fields particularly eucalypt-dominated landscapes. Commonly found in ungrazed remnants and roadsides.

Habit: Small perennial herb with slender erect branches and attractive silvery grey foliage. Egg-shaped lemon flower heads appear October to March. The fruits are tightly clustered in old dried flower heads. Good ground cover, providing a living mulch, and suppressing weed growth. Dies back slightly after flowering, particularly in winter, before reshooting.

Growing tips

- Clay to loam soils
- Intolerant of moderate levels of disturbance
- Dry well drained position in part to full sun
 - Frost hardy drought resistant
- Sensitive to prolonged waterlogging

Seed collection: Collect entire seedhead by hand into a paper bag, then allow to dry.

Propagation: readily from seed, within 3-7 weeks, by division or from cuttings.

Land protection: Ground cover that helps maintain soil moisture, prevent erosion and support plant biodiversity in grasslands and woodland understoreys.

Wildlife:

Insect-eaters: Fairy wren, willie wagtail, yellow-rumped thornbill, white plumed honey-eater, silvereye, weebills.

Insects/pollinators: nectar source for native bees and butterflies. Larval host plant for Australian painted lady butterfly. Attracts hoverflies, beetles and other tiny nectar-foraging insects. Can attract predators like praying mantis.

Shelter/habitat: for fairy wrens and thornbills. Possible frog habitat.

Enchylaena tomentosa

Ruby Saltbush



Growth: fast **Height:** to 1m **Width:** to 1 m

Habitat: Grows in a wide range of soil types. Most often found in well drained sandy soils.

Habit: A very drought tolerant, evergreen hardy shrub. Dense low-growing with small succulent blue/green leaves and bright red/yellow berries. Flowers spring-autumn. Insignificant small white flowers along the stem.

Growing tips

- Drought tolerant, heavy frosts
- Allow soil to dry out slightly between waterings
- Sandy, loamy, sandy loam, clay loam, saline soils
 - Full sun, light shade
- Resilient, adaptable and easy to establish

Propagation: from seed or softwood cuttings. Should germinate in 1-4 weeks. Can produce large quantities of black seed

Land protection: stabilises degraded sandy soil with its deep root system, preventing erosion. It is fire tolerant and quickly regenerates. As a salt tolerant species it helps manage soils health by drawing salt from soil surface.

Wildlife: A highly valued native plant for supporting biodiversity. It fruits and flowers for much of the year, providing a consistent food source.

Birds: fruit-eaters: honeyeaters, parrots, pigeons, wattlebirds, wrens, finches and robins,

Insects/pollinators: Food source for insects especially saltbush blue butterfly. It is generally not favoured by kangaroos and rabbits. often grows beside ant nests. Ants are known to carry off seeds.

Shelter/nesting: shelter for skinks and geckos which also feed on berries. Habitat for butterflies. The dense mounding habit of the plant provides habitat and foraging opportunities for small insect eating birds.

Eutaxia microphylla Mallee Bush-pea/Common Eutaxia



Growth rate: Moderate **Height:** to 1.5m **Width:** up 1.5m

Natural habitat: Mallee, heath, woodland communities and in places with Mugga Ironbark. West of the Olympic Highway eg Urana-Rand-Corowa, Walla Walla Burrumbuttock, Chiltern and Rutherglen.

Habit A low dense intricate or erect perennial shrub with tiny, linear grey-green leaves and brown twiggy stems, sometimes spiny-tipped. Small pea style flowers in vibrant yellow- red-orange colours in Aug-Nov.

Growing tips

- Tolerates wet winter soil, shade, moderate frost and drought
 - Prune severely to promote bushiness
 - Resents poorly drained soil
- dry, well-drained soil – sandy, gravelly, sandy loams, some clay
 - Open position and full sun

Seed

collection: Late Nov to mid Feb.

Propagation: From scarified seed or cuttings, which strike readily. Pour very hot water over seeds and soak until water cools. Dry to prevent rotting and sow.

Land protection: Useful in controlling soil erosion in small areas due to fibrous roots. Legume, improves soil fertility through "fixing" nitrogen.

Wildlife:

Insect-eaters: Wrens and thornbills forage for caterpillar larvae and insects. Honeyeaters may be attracted to the plant for insect prey or nectar.

Insects/Pollinators: A significant pollen and nectar source for Butterflies and native bees. Food plant for caterpillars of various butterflies and moths. Hoverflies and other beneficial insects also visit. Attracts ants which eat the arils off the seed.

Shelter/nesting: The dense, often spiny foliage, provides excellent shelter and nesting habitats for small birds.

Isotoma axillaris

Showy Isotome



Growth rate: fast **Height:** to 50cm **Width:** to 50cm

Natural habitat: Crevices on rocky cliffs, especially granite and sandstone outcrops. Shallow sandy soils of slopes and around rocky waterholes. Eg Morgan's Lookout

Habit: Hardy, low bushy perennial herb. Often grown as an annual, but self-seeds readily ensuring a constant supply in garden. Highly prolific, bright blue to mauve bluebell shaped flowers from Sept to May. Will grow happily among rocks, or as a garden border. Responds to a light watering during the flowering period if very hot weather

Growing tips

- Tolerates light frost and drought hardy
 - Variety of loamy soils
- **Stems have a milky sap can irritate skin and eyes.**
- Cut back in autumn to rejuvenate over two years.

Propagation: From fresh seed. Germinates in 4-6 weeks. Cuttings of firm growth- roots readily, or from division.

Wildlife:

Birds: Insect-eaters- fairy wrens, thornbills

Nectar-feeders- small honeyeaters, silvereyes and red wattle birds.

Insects/pollinators: particularly blue banded bees are attracted to scented flowers. Food source for butterflies, moths (and their larvae), also hoverflies and soldier beetles.

Habitat/shelter: Its low-growing mounding ground cover can provide habitat and cover for small birds.

Dillwynia sericea Showy Parrot Pea



Growth rate: Moderate. **Height:** to 1m **Width:** to 1m

Natural habitat: Widespread east of the Olympic Highway. Noted in the Long Plain-West Hume and Albury district. Exposed heath, woodland and dry sclerophyll forest on a range of soils. Important component of understorey.

Habit: Hardy erect to low-lying shrub with stiff, hairy stems and linear leaves. Conspicuous yellow-orange and red-centred flowers from Sep-Dec. Improves soil fertility through "fixing" nitrogen.

Growing tips

- Well-drained sandy or loam soils
 - Full sun to semi-shade
- Light pruning after flowering to maintain shape
 - Moderate water once established
- Ideal for a dense flowering hedge or screening.

Seed collection: Late Oct to late Feb. Monitor closely as mature seeds released immediately or within 1-2 days.

Propagation: From scarified seed. Cuttings- strike well using firm current season's growth.

Wildlife: Although primarily bee pollinated, the plant is noted for attracting insects that can attract larger, opportunistic nectar and small insect-feeding birds.

Insects/pollinators: Nectar and pollen source for native bees. Flowers attract pollinators like hoverflies. Nectar source for butterflies and food for caterpillars.

Insect-eating birds: wrens, thornbills, silvereyes, fantails, pardalotes and willie wagtails.

Nectar-feeding birds: silvereyes and eastern spinebills.

Shelter/habitat: Dense foliage excellent shelter and protection from predators for small insect and nectar feeding birds.