**Graptophyllum excelsum** (F.Muell.) Druce

**Family:**
Acanthaceae


**Common name:**
Fuchsia, Native; Scarlet Fuchsia; Letter Leaf; Native Fuchsia; Fuchsia, Scarlet

**Stem**
Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub up to 3 m tall.

**Leaves**
Leaves usually clustered on short lateral shoots, often borne +/- in four rows. Leaves rather variable, about 1.3-2.5 x 0.5-1 cm, paired leaves +/- equal to unequal, margin entire or with a few teeth towards the apex. Spines about 5-12 mm long, occasionally visible in leaf axils. Glands or leaf oil dots elongated, +/- cigar-shaped.

**Flowers**
Flowers shortly pedicellate. Corolla 2-lipped (upper lip +/- straight, lower lip 2-lobed and reflexed) about 25-35 mm long overall. Stamens two, anthers slightly exerted, anther locules attached side by side, connective not extending beyond the anthers, filaments hairy towards the base. Ovary green and style glabrous. Ovules erect, superposed, two per locule. Style ending in two stigmas, one larger than the other.

**Fruit**
Fruits subtended by persistent linear sepals each about 5-6 mm long. Capsule obovoid, about 17-27 mm long. Seeds up to 4 per fruit, about 3-5 mm diam. Style remnants persistent at the apex. Testa sculptured, pitted and wrinkled. Radicle straight, about 1 mm long, slightly oblique to the cotyledons.

**Seedlings**
Cotyledons about 7-10 x 7-11 mm +/- equidimensional or wider than long. First pair of leaves +/- spatulate but the margins conspicuously toothed or lobed from about the middle to the apex. Usually two teeth on each side. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf margins conspicuously toothed and occasionally one leaf of each opposite pair with a slender axillary spine about 5 mm long often opposed by a short leaf shoot in the other leaf axil. Leaves in each pair somewhat unequal in size. Seed germination time 19 days.

**Distribution and Ecology**
The species as recognized in this work is endemic to Queensland, occurs in NEQ and CEQ. Altitudinal range in NEQ from 350-600 m. This circumscription is wider than that of Barker (1986). Often grows on limestone in monsoon forest and vine thickets.

**Natural History & Notes**
This species has horticultural potential producing large red flowers.

**Synonyms**

**RFK Code**
3004