

Melaleuca leucadendra (L.) L.

Family:
Myrtaceae

Linnaeus, C. von (1767) *Mantissa Plantarum* : 105.

Common name:

Paperbark; White Tea Tree; Weeping Teatree; Weeping Tea Tree; Weeping Paperbark; Swamp Tea Tree; River Cadjeput; Paperbark Tree; Paperbark Tea Tree; Cajeput; Cajaput Tree; Butterscotch Paperbark; Brown Tea Tree; Big White Paperbark; Broad-leaved Tea Tree

Stem

Bark white or pale. Dead bark layered.

Leaves

Leaf blades more than seven times as long as wide, about 11.5-17 x 0.8-2.1 cm, with five longitudinal veins more prominent than the rest. Pale papery bark usually visible on the larger twigs but not often on the leafy twigs. Young shoots and twigs clothed in white or silver, prostrate hairs.

Flowers

Inflorescences about 25-30 mm wide. Flowers usually in threes. Stamens about 10-24 mm long, +/- fused in five bundles opposite the petals. Flowers have a strong sweet odour.

Fruit

Capsules sessile, glabrous, more than 4 mm diam. Cotyledons folded lengthways.

Seedlings

Cotyledons obovate, about 2-3 mm long. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade linear, narrowly elliptic or narrowly obovate; oil dots small, visible only with a lens. Seed germination time 9 to 17 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in WA, NT, CYP, NEQ and CEQ. Altitudinal range from sea level to 700 m. Grows as a rheophyte along the creeks and rivers of northern Australia, also found in beach forest, swampy rain forest and gallery forest. Also occurs in the Moluccas and New Guinea.

Natural History & Notes

A large tree often planted in parks and as a street tree. It will withstand very moist and saline conditions. The numerous pendant cream bottle brush flowers attract a wide variety of birds and Flying Foxes.

Synonyms

Myrtus leucadendra L., *Species Plantarum* ed 2 : 676(1767), Type: Lecto Rumphius Herbarium Amboinensis, 2:72, t. 16. (the figure and description). Fide Blake. Contr. Queensland Herb. 1:17 (1968).

RFK Code

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Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



Fruit [not vouchered]. CC-BY J.L.

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Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



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