

Myrtaceae
Backhousia myrtifolia
grey myrtle



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ETYMOLOGY

(back-HOW-zee-a) After James Backhouse, early quaker missionary among convicts; The species myrtifolia = with leaves like genus Myrtus.

LIFEFORM

Tree 3-7m x 2-4m Spread

STATUS

Well conserved; Common. Associated with *Syncarpia glomulifera* or *Eucalyptus tereticornis*

OCCURS

Cubberla/Witton Qld to Bega, Mt Dromedary, NSW

QLD DISTRICTS

Burnett, Moreton, Port Curtis, Wide Bay

HABITAT

Watercourse, Parabolic dunes, Subtropical Rainforest

LEAVES

Opposite, 3.5-7.5 x 1-3.5 cm, ovate, base rounded, dark green, entire with a fine point, lateral veins conspicuous, intramarginal vein close to margin, raised midvein above & below, oil glands large distinct on 3-6 mm stalks.

FLOWERS

Cream, 2-3 mm petals (Stamens 6 mm Sepals 6-9 mm), petaloid, yellowish. axillary, mostly dichasia with the central flower aborted; 20-35 mm peduncle, bunched at branchlet ends.

Flowering Times Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan

FRUIT

Capsules, 6 mm, 4-5 starry sepals with dry calyx lobes; barely larger than the flower, topped by the persistent, spreading sepals. **Fruiting Times** Dec, Jan

BARK

Finely longitude stripes; Flaky bark has a cinnamon scent.

STEM

Young branchlets (pale-hairy) with spreading hairs.

ETHNOBOTANY

Leaves can be crushed up and rubbed on skin as an insect repellent. Timber was used for tool handles, fishing rods and bows; Leaves spicy odor due to 80% elemicin + methyl cinnamate, caryophyllene oxide, spathulenol and eugenol.

LANDSCAPE USES

Ideal for streetscaping and screen; Branches low to the ground planting in a small garden.

TOLERANCE

Part shade: Likes plenty of moisture Tolerates a light frost.

WILDLIFE

Blossom Bat also Attracts bird-life and pollinators with massed flowers.

INSECTS

Sap-sucking Bugs, *Echiomima mythica* (Moth)