

Melaleuca cardiophylla

TANGLING MELALEUCA

F.Muell.

Flowering period: July–January.

Description: Erect, spreading shrub to 2 m high with papery, flaking bark. Leaves alternate along stem, 4–9 mm long, 2.5–8 mm wide, heart-shaped with a sharp tip. Flowers in dense to open spikes often only along one side of the stem comprising bundles of 8–12 mm long stamens. Seeds produced in grey, globular woody capsules that retain a distinctive crown-like arrangement of old calyx lobes. Seeds can be collected from excised capsules by drying in a warm, dry location. Seeds are released after 3–4 days and comprise both sterile (non-germinative) packing material and small seeds.

Pollination: Open pollinated by a wide variety of insects that seek out the rich nectar provided by the flowers.

Distribution: In the Perth region from Hillarys north to Exmouth Gulf growing on limestone and secondary stabilised dunes. Branches form intricate, tangled arrangements hence the common name of tangling melaleuca.

Propagation: Easily grown from seed sown in late summer to early autumn. Mix the fine seed with a little dry sand prior to distributing over the seed tray. Cover with fine blue-metal or a light covering of sand and keep moist. Prick out at the 4–6 leaf stage.

Uses in restoration: Reliable and easy to establish species that requires some protection from direct winds and salt spray. Requires full sun.

Notes: A species that may have some uses in civic landscaping in coastal areas due to its rounded form. Provides important nesting and roosting sites for small birds, particularly the white-winged fairy-wren.



Habit



Fruit



Flowers



Distribution

E.P. Tay