

Melaleuca lanceolata ROTTNEST ISLAND TEA-TREE

Otto

Flowering period: January–September.

Description: Dense canopied tall shrub or tree, 1–5 m high with rough, grey bark. Leaves small, alternate, 7–16 mm long, 1–2 mm wide. Flowers in leafy 10–15 mm long spikes towards end of current season's growth with each flower comprising a cluster of stamens up to 7 mm long. Seeds produced in files comprising 3–4 mm long, globular woody capsules produced in series after flowering and remaining on the plant for one or more years. Seeds fine and dust-like mixed with sterile packing material (ovulode).

Pollination: Open pollinated by a wide variety of insects and nectar seeking species.

Distribution: From Shark Bay south to eastern Australia. Locally common particularly in swales in dunes and other wind protected locations. Once a dominant plant over much of Rottnest Island; however, the species is highly sensitive to fire and grazing. Without protection, plants become wind-pruned.

Propagation: Easily propagated from seed sown in late summer to early autumn. Prick out seedlings at the 4–6 leaf stage.

Uses in restoration: A particularly useful species in coastal restoration; however, the species does not occur naturally in many parts of the metropolitan region north of Woodmans Point. Rottnest tea-tree was widely planted in dunes in metropolitan Perth, particularly in the City Beach/Floreat beachfront, where the species does not naturally occur and where the plant quickly establishes in dunes and forms dense, shaded stands that preclude other native species. Rottnest tea-tree may become weedy when planted outside of its natural habitats.

Notes: A highly useful native species for coastal landscaping away from natural dune areas. Can be pruned and hedged in the home garden; however, only trim as far as the last green leaf.



Habit



Flowers



Fruit



Distribution