

Melastomataceae

Melastoma malabathricum

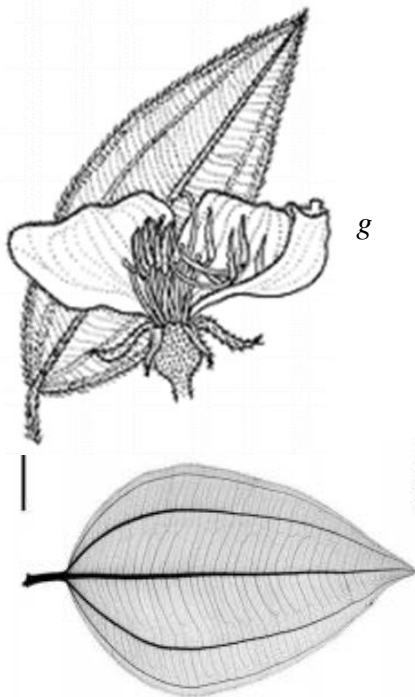
Old Name *Melastoma affine*

Blue Tongue / Native Lasiandra



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Field Botanist



Amegilla sp. Blue-banded Bee



Palaeorhiza parallela Masked Bee

ETYMOLOGY

History of words

(mel-a-STO-ma) Mela = black Greek stoma = a mouth;
The species malabathricum = from Malabar SW India.

LIFEFORM

Shrub 50cm-2m x 2m Spread

STATUS

Regionally Significant SE Qld; Found at Helidon Hills disjunct population; Recorded at 535 locations (Moran, A 2009).

HABITAT

Coastal heaths, Wallum, woodlands, Swamps

TOLERANCES

Full sun to partial shade. Well drained to poorly drained soil.

LEAVES

Alternate, 4-12 x 2-4 cm, both sides hairy discolorous with 3 veins prominent underside

FLOWERS

Pale pink, 5 petalled with bright yellow stamens curved in the centre.

Flowering Times: Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec

FRUIT

Red-purple Edible

Fruiting Times: Dec, Jan, Feb, March

BARK

Smooth bark

STEM

Erect stiff stems round, unbranched with short creeping rhizomes

ETHNOBOTANY

Interrelations between people and plants

Edible fruit, roots and flowers

Ornamental potential usage in landscaping

Medicinal decoction of leaves & young shoots drunk to cure diarrhoea.

BIRD

Australian Brush turkey, Double-eyed Fig-parrot, Lewin's Honeyeater

BUTTERFLY

Coral Jewel

BEE

Amegilla pulchra (Blue-banded Bee) *Trigona carbonaria* (Stingless Native Bee) *Aphis* (European Bee) European bees poor pollinators compared with *Trigona carbonaria*

Gnathothlibus erotus ssp eras (Hawk Moth)

MOTH

INDIGENOUS USE

Eat ripe fruit and roots raw.

ID FEATURE

Distinctive coarse hairy leaves with 3 veins + Pale pink 5 petalled flowers + brown scaly fruits with purplish black pulp.