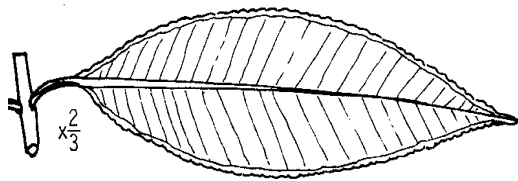


## Myrtaceae

### *Backhousia citriodora*

lemon ironwood



LEMON IRONWOOD

*Backhousia citriodora*



Ann Moran

Field Botanist



#### ETYMOLOGY

(back-HOW-zee-a) After James Backhouse. Early Quaker missionary among convicts, Botanical collector and nurseryman at York in England The species citriodora (sit-ree-o-DOH-rah) from Latin citrus referring to lemon sweet-smelling or fragrant;

#### LIFEFORM

Tree 3-20 m x 4 m spread

#### STATUS

Poorly conserved; Rare population size;

#### OCCURS

Lead Ck Ravenshoe, Pistol Gap Rockhampton, Q

#### HABITAT

Rainforest, Open forest

#### TOLERANCES

Full sun and Semi-shade Drought tolerant Slightly frost tender when young

#### LEAVES

Opposite, 5-12 x 1-2.5 cm, dark green elliptical, raised midrib, serrated hairy new growth;

#### FLOWERS

Clusters terminal, 6 mm, white, scented 4-5 star-like petals in axillary 3-9 heads; **Flowering**

**Times:** Nov, Dec

#### FRUIT

Capsules, 4-5 starry sepals with dry calyx lobes; **Fruiting Times:** Dec, Jan, Feb, March

#### BARK

Smooth whitish grey/brown furrowed;

#### TRUNK or STEM

Small tree with upright stems; Young shoots and branches softly hairy;

#### ETHNOBOTANY

Ornamental potential usage in landscaping; Attracts Blossom Bat. Leaves used as flavouring in Asian cooking, as a tea; Flavouring used in soups main courses desserts; Lemon Myrtle 90-97% citral has a sweet citral fragrance & taste; Now grown commercial in plantations foliage for extraction of oil in perfumes; Timber doesn't warp even under very extreme conditions used for fishing rods and tool handles; Leaves yield 90% Citral used as lemon flavour in tea, soft drink, perfume sachets, confectionery + *Lycene*, *methyl*, *heptenone*, *linalool*, *citronellal* & *beta cyclocitral*. Wood light pink for ornamental purposes with scented flowers, As perfume in soaps, sachets.

#### INSECTS

*Echiomima mythica* (Moth)

#### ABORIGINAL USES

Wood used to make stone axe handles by aborigines.

#### ID FEATURE

Leaves opposite lemon-scented, narrow ovate, apex acuminate; branchlets and inflorescences pubescent;