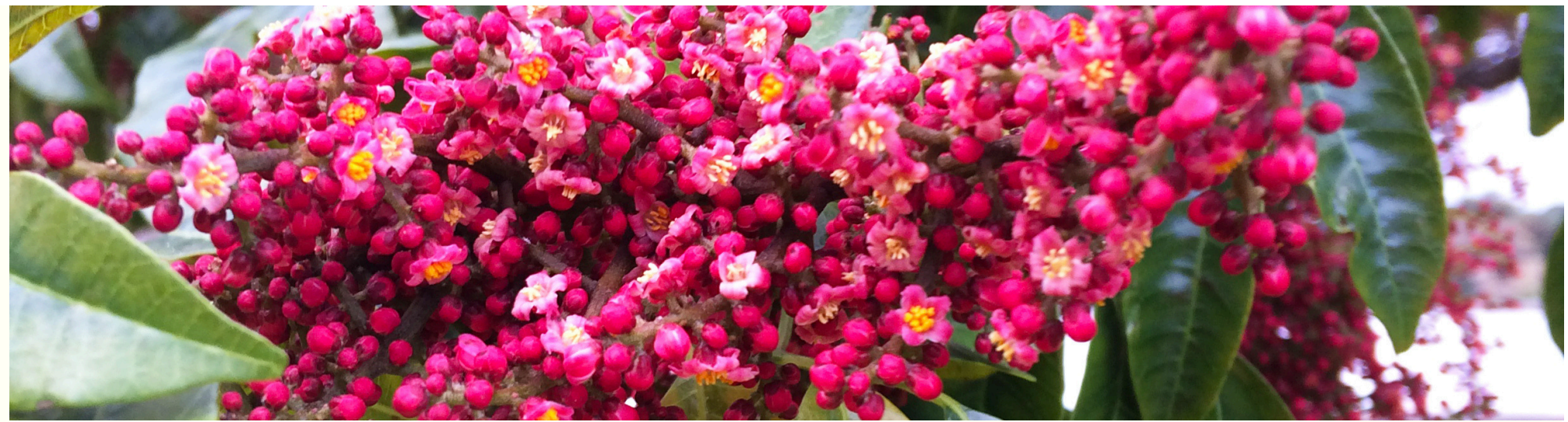


October 2025

# Plant of the month



## Deep Yellowwood



**Common Name:** Deep Yellowwood  
**Scientific Name:** *Rhodosphaera rhodanthema* (F.Muell.) Engl.  
**Family:** Anarcardiaceae  
**Genus:** *Rhodosphaera* – from Greek *rhodon* – rose, *sphaera* – ball refers to reddish, round fruit.  
**Species epithet:** *Rhodanthema* – refers to red flowers, from the Greek *rhodan* – rose and *anthema* from *anthos* – flower.

This appealing rainforest tree is the only species in the genus and endemic to the rainforests of northern NSW and southeast Queensland. The common name of the tree refers to the colour of trees' finely grained heartwood. The timber has a silky lustre and these qualities, along with its durability make it highly regarded for cabinetmaking.

Mature trees either produce male flowers or female flowers meaning at least two trees are required to produce viable seeds. The fruit looks a little like the Australian chocolates known as Jaffas and similarly it has been known to roll on hard surfaces. Fruit is held on the tree for many months and each fruit contains a single seed.

The tiny flowers are most effectively pollinated by tiny Australian stingless bees such as *Tetragonula carbonaria*. They are small enough to enter the flowers searching for pollen and nectar and move pollen from tree to tree. Hives of these bees can be seen throughout the Garden.



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### Distribution

Eastern Australia from the Macleay River New South Wales to Maryborough southeast Queensland.

### Native Habitat

Sub-tropical and dry Rainforest.

### Description

Tree to 20m high with brown to grey scaly bark. Juvenile leaves are lobed, somewhat resembling oak leaves. Mature leaves are pinnate 8-20cm long with 3-11 leaflets.

### Flowers

Small pinkish red buds (6-9 mm diameter) open to reveal tiny white, pink and red petals. Flowers are arranged in large panicles at the ends of branchlets. Trees are dioecious meaning they produce either functionally male or female flowers.

### Fruit

A shiny brown drupe, 1cm in diameter. Fruit forms only on trees that produce female flowers.

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