

November 2025

Plant of the month

White Plume Grevillea



Common Name: White Plume Grevillea
Scientific Name: *Grevillea leucopteris*
Carl Meissner
Family: *Proteaceae*
Genus: *Grevillea*- after Charles Francis Greville, founder UK Royal Horticultural Society
Species epithet: *leucopteris*- meaning “white-winged’ referring to the seed



About

The massed spikes of flowers have a strong sweet odour that is most pronounced at night. It is known by a secondary unflattering common name “Old Socks” due to the scent of its flowers which are supposed to smell like old dirty socks, however smell sweet to some people.

Grevillea leucopteris was first formally described in 1855 by Carl Meissner in Hooker's *Journal of Botany and Kew Garden Miscellany* from specimens collected by James Drummond in the first 30 years of the Swan River settlement in Western Australia.

This Grevillea is a wonderful habitat plant, with honeyeaters and native bees swarming to it throughout the flowering season. It is fast growing and tolerant of drought, frost, alkaline soils and coastal conditions

Distribution

Lower Murchison River to Avon Wheatbelt, Geraldton Sandplains, Swan Coastal Plain, and Yalgoo bioregions of south-western Western Australia.



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Native Habitat

Heath and shrubland

Description

A spreading, bushy shrub, between one and five meters in height.

Flowers

It flowers profusely with pinkish buds and clusters of creamy white flowers displayed on the ends of stems, above the ferny grey foliage. Flowering mainly occurs from July to December, and the fruit is a smooth oblong follicle.

Fruit

The fruit is a follicle that splits along one side to release the seeds. This is a special type of seed, known as a “hat” seed, which is a hard, round and black. It has a white, hairy tuft on one end which assists its dispersal by the wind.

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