

Melaleuca viminalis (*Callistemon viminalis*)

Common name: Weeping Bottle brush, Cheel

Family: Myrtaceae

Habit: Tree

Location: Front area of Hostel

Distribution: It occurs along the eastern part of Queensland from the Cape York Peninsula south to Moree and Grafton in New South Wales. There are also disjunct populations in the far north and south-west of Western Australia. It mostly grows in and along watercourses, mainly in sandstone or granite country.

Description:

Melaleuca viminalis is a large shrub or small tree growing to 10 m (30 ft) tall with hard, fibrous, furrowed bark, a number of trunks and usually pendulous branches. Its leaves are arranged alternately and are 1–5 in. long, 0.1–1 in. wide, more or less flat, very narrow elliptical to narrow egg-shaped with the narrower end towards the base and the other end tapering to a sharp point. The leaves have a mid-vein, 9-27 lateral veins and large number of conspicuous oil glands. The flowers are bright red and are arranged in spikes on and around the ends of branches which continue to grow after flowering. The spikes are 1–2 in. in diameter and 2–4 in. long with 15 to 50 individual flowers. The petals are 0.1–0.2 in. long and fall off as the flower ages and the stamens are arranged in five bundles around the flower. The bundles are sometimes obscure but each contains 9 to 14 stamens. Flowering occurs from September to December and often sporadically throughout the year. Flowering is followed by fruit which are woody capsules, 0.1–0.2 in. long and 0.20–0.24 in. in diameter.

Uses:

A widely grown garden plant and street tree is a hardy species in most soils when grown in full sun. It is useful as a screening plant and is suitable for planting as a street tree. Leaves and flowers are used to make a very pleasant tea. It is used as an anti-ageing cosmetics ingredient. It has anti-bacterial, anti-oxidant properties, antifungal, antiviral, anticough, anti-inflammatory, astringent, diuretic, antidiabetic, anthelmintic, relaxant, neuroprotective, analgesic, anticancer, antidiarrheal, vulnerary, hepatoprotective, cardioprotective, antispasmodic, hypolipidemic, etc.



