



Powder Puff Lilly Pilly



A shade above the rest



One of the most attractive and versatile of all Lilly Pilly. Not only will it grow in deep shade and still produce masses of amazing crimson powder puff flowers, its wonderful weeping habit, with the most stunning bronze new growth, will highlight any dark corner of a garden.

It can be used as an ornamental shrub or an understory plant, it grows to a height perfect for fence screening or tamed enough as an attractive potted plant accessible for people with smaller gardens and courtyards. And the flowers can be used to attract wildlife such as birds and honeyeaters.

Propagation and cultivation

Propagation of *S. wilsonii* may be carried out from fresh seed, either by sowing the fruits whole or after removing the flesh. Germination may be slow and spasmodic. The species can also be grown from cuttings of firm, current season's growth.

Uses

Unlike most Lilly Pilly that bear deep pink fruits, the Powder Puff Lilly Pilly fruit is white and even though it can be eaten raw it is reported to be quite sour but edible when cooked with sugar.

Family: *Myrtaceae*

Genus: *Syzygium*

Botanic name: *Syzygium wilsonii* (first named as *Eugenia wilsonii*) *wilsonii* – named in honour of Edward Wilson (1813-1878) by Ferdinand von Mueller. Wilson was an Englishman who became a journalist, newspaper owner and philanthropist in Victoria. He is best known for his role in the Acclimatisation Society of Victoria.

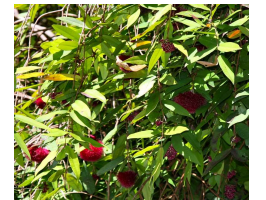
Also known as: Powder Puff Lilly Pilly, Water Gum, Plum Satinash

Origin: Queensland, Australia

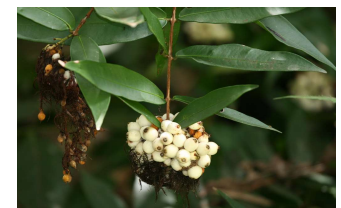
Habitat: An understory species, this shade loving well-known native shrub has its origin in tropical rainforests between Ingham and Cooktown in far northern Queensland.

Description: The shrub reaches a height of up to 5m and is slow growing. Bark is reddish brown in colour with a firm and slightly rough texture.

The leaves are opposite and glossy-green, somewhat leathery, with the lower surface much paler, ranging from lanceolate to elliptic, to about 18cm long and 5cm wide, with a long pointy (acuminate) tip. The new growth with a cascading habit is red to bronze and very attractive.



In late spring early summer, striking deep crimson red powder puff shaped flower heads appear. The staminate flowers are produced in large numbers, about 10mm across long with stamens up to 20mm or more long, creating a very eye-catching effect. The flowers are typically larger than other more southern Lilly Pilly and apart from hybrids, it is the only Lilly Pilly with crimson flowers.



Clusters of succulent white fruits follow the flowers in autumn. The pure white or cream-coloured and fleshy fruit (a berry) reaches a length of 15mm. It varies in shape from ovoid (egg-shaped) to obovoid (reverse egg-shaped) or can be ellipsoid (broadest at the middle; olive-shaped). The single brown coloured and soft shelled seed is up to 8mm long. The persistent (flower) calyx is visible at the apex.



Sources:

<https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/interns-2004/syzygium-wilsonii.html>
<https://anpsa.org.au/>