



Purple Cherry Lilly Pilly



Makes an impression



This impressive tree is up to 40m tall and often part of the highest canopy in subtropical rainforests.

Older specimens develop large buttress roots and a solid upright trunk that is often covered in epiphytic ferns, lichens and mosses.

The tree is a splendid ornamental, hardy in full sun and tolerant of some frost. The bright red new growth can be seen from a distance.

Propagation and cultivation

Seed germination is slow, erratic and unreliable. Fruit is prone to insect attack. Soaking of the seeds is recommended to drown insect larvae. Germination results can range from 27% to 100%.

Uses

The flesh is unpalatable to humans but is eaten by many rainforest birds, including the topknot pigeon.

Family: *Myrtaceae*

Genus: *Syzygium*

Botanic name: *Syzygium crebrinerve* (C.T.White) L.A.S.Johnson
Johnson, L.A.S. - (17 September 1962) Taxonomic notes on Australian plants, Contributions from the NSW National Herbarium 3(3): 9; basionym: *Eugenia crebrinervis* - C.T.White

Also known as: Purple Cherry Lilly Pilly, Rose Satinash, Black Water Gum

Origin: East coast of Australia

Habitat: Grows in sub-tropical rainforest on basaltic or fertile alluvial soil and found from near Taree, NSW to Calliope in Queensland

Description: A fairly common Australian tree, it is a medium to tall tree, sometimes reaching 45m in height and a metre in trunk diameter. The tree's crown appears dark and full, though new growth is bright red.

The bark is a grey/fawn colour, with numerous depressions caused by the shedding of scales of bark. New live bark is a purplish brown colour. Large *Syzygium crebrinerve* are significantly buttressed at the base.

The leaves are opposite, simple, and entire, up to 11cm long. Margins are narrowed at each end and drawn out into a point. Young leaves are bright red. Leaf stalks are 6mm long.



Masses of white flowers appear in the spring, in panicles at the ends of branchlets. Flowers are followed by fruits every second or third summer.

The large brightly coloured shiny purple fruit (a berry) is globe shaped and reaches up to 25mm in diameter. The fruit matures from January to April. A single seed (if present) is surrounded by a pulp which is edible but tasteless and floury by human standards.



Sources:

en.wikipedia.org › wiki › *Syzygium crebrinerve*
<https://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Szyzygium~crebrinerve>
https://www.allcreativedesigns.com.au/pages/galltrees10.html#s_p_Szyzy