

# SHOWY NATIVE TREES

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It is great to see how popular Australian native trees have become in landscape design. Some usual suspects include *Backhousia*, *Buckinghamia*, *Brachychiton*, *Cupaniopsis*, *Elaeocarpus*, *Harpullia*, *Hibiscus*, *Hymenosporum*, *Tristaniopsis* and *Xanthostemon*. However there are other different and beautiful trees that are not seen very much and are worthy of consideration. I have been doing a little research and discovered some gorgeous trees with remarkable very showy flowers. The downside for designers in colder zones is that many of the showy flowered native trees prefer warmer climates. Here are a few that will satisfy council, client and designer.



Pic: Catherine Stewart

## ***Alloxylon flammeum***

Terminal clusters of showy orange-red flowers cover the Tree Waratah in late spring to early summer. It can be grown from seed but cutting plants flower earlier. They grow best in tropical and subtropical gardens but do grow as far south as Sydney. They like rich soil with regular watering. It is worth trying for the spectacular flowering season.



Pic: David Tranter

## ***Alloxylon pinnatum***

Dorrigo Waratah needs a site protected from hot sun and wind. The one in the photo grows in the park alongside the railway station at Robertson where a number have been planted and grow extremely well, even through

our cold winters! They are planted on a north facing slope, protected by the hill behind. *A. pinnatum* is much smaller in cultivation than its natural 25m. Dramatic pinky-red flowers in terminal heads cover the plant in late spring and early summer.



Pic: Catherine Stewart

## ***Angophora hispida***

Known as Dwarf Apple this twisted gnarled tree has stunning sprays of white flowers in summer. It can grow up to 7m, but is more likely to only reach 4m in cultivation. As the name suggests it is a rather bristly tree with stiff reddish hairs on the

branches and flower stalks. Leaves are broad and leathery grey-green with purple-red new growth. It is slightly frost tender when young but otherwise tolerant of a wide range of climate and soil conditions with a sunny sheltered aspect.



Pic: Catherine Stewart

## ***Barklya syringifolia***

Growing from north eastern NSW to Mackay in Queensland this tree has a bushy habit to around 8m in height. Glossy heart shaped leaves set off colourful sprays of yellowy-orange flowers which appear in early summer, followed by a small flat seed pod. It will flower when quite small -

2m. *Barklya* will tolerate full sun and a light frost but prefers dappled sun in a warmer sheltered aspect. Plant in well composted soil - best to use plants that are produced from cuttings or aerial layering.



Pic: Catherine Stewart

## ***Brachychiton acerifolius x populneus***

There are several hybrids from this natural hybrid. *B. 'Jerilderie Red'*, *B. 'Froggatt's Pink'*, *B x roseus* and *B. 'Berry Bells'*. All have the same beautiful flowering panicles of *B. acerifolius* ranging in colour from deep pink to red. Flowering is more reliable than the parent plants. The trees

are small to medium and are very versatile being frost and drought tolerant and perform well in a wide range of climates and soils. Hybrids need to be propagated vegetatively and the best method is by grafting.



Pic: Catherine Stewart

## ***Cassia brewsteri subsp. marksiana***

This beautiful small tree is classified as an endangered species due to reduction of its natural habitat in northern NSW and south-east Queensland. Growing up to 5-10m in cultivation Brush Cassia has fragrant, golden-yellow flowers, hanging in large pendulous