



THREE VERY ATTRACTIVE MELALEUCA IN A RANGE OF COLOURS

GENUS MELALEUCA RADULA, FILIFOLIA AND FULGENS SP FULGENS

Graceful honey myrtle, *Melaleuca radula*, is one of the most widely cultivated members of the genus and is well established in general horticulture. The species forms a delightful small open shrub rarely exceeding 5 feet in height and three feet in width. The mauve or very light purple flowers occur in clusters on the older stems and flower spikes contain between three and eight flowers up to about an inch in diameter. The leaves are narrowly-elliptical in shape and up to two inches long.

The graceful honey myrtle is frost hardy (-7*c/20*f) and has proven to be adaptable over a wide range of climates when provided with good drainage in either full sun or part shade. However, best performance is achieved under conditions of good drainage with assured moisture. It responds to annual fertilising after flowering and to an annual light pruning to encourage a bushy shape.

Propagation is easy from both seed.

Wiry Honey Myrtle, *Melaleuca filifolia* is a widely cultivated members of the genus and is well established in general horticulture. The species forms a medium shrub to about 5 feet in both height and width. The reddish/ mauve flowers occur in large globular clusters in spring and summer. The leaves are oblong-elliptical in shape and about 10mm long.

Filifolia has proven to be adaptable over a range of climates and soils although it is somewhat frost sensitive (to about 4°C 20° F.) and will tolerate less than perfect drainage. However, best performance is achieved under conditions with assured moisture. Flowering is best in sunny positions. It responds to annual fertilising after flowering and to an annual light pruning to encourage a bushy shape. Propagation is easy from both seed and cuttings.

This species makes a spectacular feature tree with its very attractive blooms and the peeling, papery bark often exhibited by melaleuca. It is a nectar producing tree that is attractive to pollenating birds.

Propagation is easy from seed.

Scarlet Honey Myrtle, *Melaleuca fulgens* is one of the most widely cultivated members of the melaleucas and is one of the most beautiful. A small to medium sized shrub it varies in height from 18 inches to 6 feet and the same in breadth, but normally to about four and a half feet. Foliage is a grey-green with narrowly elliptical leaves to about one inch. The flowers, borne on short shoots in the spring and early summer, are cylindrical spikes similar to the bottlebrush and up to 2 inches or more in length. They are normally a brilliant red but can range into apricot and pink and make a very striking display. It is very popular with pollinating birds.

Although native to a dry summer climate this species has been grown successfully in the wetter summer conditions of Australia's east coast in well drained, sunny positions. This species hybridises easily, particularly with *Melaleuca radula*, one of the purple flowering melaleuca, and is the parent of a number of very attractive hybrids.

This species grows naturally in loam, sand or gravel over granite but can take moist well-drained soils. It has some frost tolerance but should be protected from heavy frost particularly until established.

This species is quick growing and is easily grown from seed..