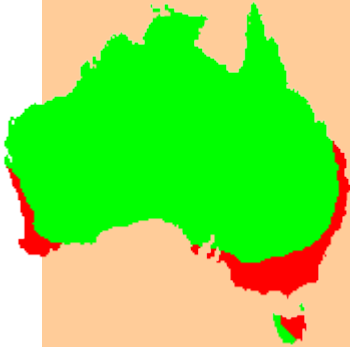


# Burchardia umbellata



**Family:** Colchicaceae

**Distribution:** Open forests, woodlands and heath in all States, often in damp or swampy areas.

**Common Name:** Milkmaids

**Derivation of Name:** *Burchardia*....after Johann Heinrich Burckhardt, a German botanist  
*umbellata*.... From Latin, *umbella*, a little shadow or umbrella and the suffix *-atus*, possessive of or likeness to, referring to the the flowers occurring in umbels (an umbrella-like arrangement with flower stems all arising from a common point).

**Conservation Status:** Not considered to be at risk in the wild.

## General Description:

*Burchardia* is a genus of 2 species of perennial herbs. *B.umbellata* is widespread while *B.multiflora* is found only in Western Australia.



***Burchardia umbellata***

Photo: Brian Walters

*Burchardia umbellata* is a grass-like plant with narrow, linear leaves to about 60 cm long by 1.5-4 mm wide. Flowers arise on a slender, 50-60 cm high stalk with two leaf-like bracts. The white flowers have a reddish centre and occur in clusters (umbels) of 2-10 flowers. Each flower is about 25 mm in diameter and may occasionally be tinged with pink. Flowering occurs in spring.

This species is not often cultivated as plants are rarely, if ever, available in nurseries. They require moist but well drained soils in a sunny or lightly shaded location. They are small plants which are inconspicuous when not in flower and are easily overwhelmed by more vigorous plants growing nearby. They are suitable for containers.

Plants can be propagated from seed which does not require pretreatment for successful germination. However, seed is not readily available from commercial suppliers.