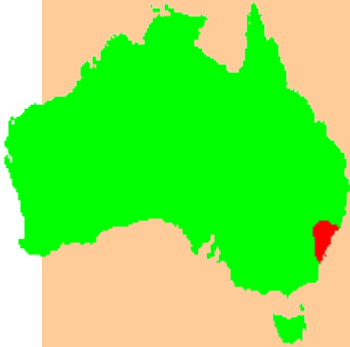


Darwinia taxifolia



Family:	Myrtaceae
Distribution:	Heath in central eastern New South Wales.
Common Name:	No generally accepted common name.
Derivation of Name:	<i>Darwinia</i> ; after Dr Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin. <i>taxifolia</i> ; leaves resembling those of those of the yew (<i>Taxus</i>).
Conservation Status:	Not considered to be at risk in the wild.

General Description:

Darwinia is a genus of about 70 species which are found only in Australia. The majority are found in the south of Western Australia.



Darwinia taxifolia subsp. *macrolaena*

Photo: Brian Walters

Darwinia taxifolia is an erect or prostrate shrub from 0.3 to 1 metre high. The leaves are greyish green, about 5-15 mm long by 1-2 mm wide, curving upwards slightly and tapering to a point. The small flowers occur in clusters of 2 to 4 and are red in colour. The flowers usually occur in spring to early summer. Two subspecies are recognised: subsp. *taxifolia* and subsp. *macrolaena*, the most obvious difference being the relatively large flowers of the latter. Subsp. *macrolaena* also has a wider natural range than subsp. *taxifolia*.

D. taxifolia subsp. *macrolaena* is well known in cultivation and has proven to be hardy in well

drained soils with some protection from direct summer sun. It will not tolerate boggy conditions but does appreciate extra watering during extended dry periods. It also makes quite an attractive container plant. Subsp.*taxifolia* is rarely seen in cultivation but should respond to similar conditions. From a horticultural point of view, subsp.*macrolaena* is the more desirable form.

Seed of *Darwinia species*, generally, is not easy to germinate. The species can, however, be grown fairly easily from cuttings of hardened, current season's growth.