

RHODOMYRTUS PSIDOIDES (Ro-do-mer-tus sid-oy-dees)

The Native Guava

This rainforest tree is very intriguing. It is fairly common in most remnant rainforests but it can be hard to spot because very simply, it hides!

Several years ago I planted one on my riverbank and for the first 2-3 years it was easily seen but now, you can walk past every day and not even know it is there because it blends in really well with the other trees around it.

A few years back I was invited to a property at Salisbury and as I drove in I was amazed to see a whole group of the growing around a dead Eucalypt in the middle of an open paddock.

The plants were almost fully grown and were obviously brought there by our feathered friends from the nearby National Park. It certainly opened my eyes to the possibilities of this species.

In the rainforest it can grow to 12m high with a trunk about 25cm in diameter, but in the open it grows to only half that size. I have planted six of them in an open paddock in full sun and they have developed into nicely shaped dense shrubs in the last 2 years. They did suffer a bit in the extreme heat but they survived with minimal damage and bounced back well when the rains came. They have also survived the severe frost episodes that have damaged so many plants this year with minimal damage.

The dense foliage provides a good habitat for birds giving them both shade and visual protection. The fruit is edible if you can beat the birds to it because the same birds that live in these trees relish the fruit as well. The flowers are usually white or occasionally pink and generally appear in early summer. The timber is light coloured and tough but the trunks are not substantial enough to be of much use so far as timber and carpentry go.

The native Guava occurs from around Gosford NSW through to Maryborough in Queensland. It has been recorded locally at Clarence Town, Paterson, Upper Williams River, Upper Allyn River, Bingleburra and Barrington Tops National Park to name a few.



Photo – A 6 year old specimen.