

PLUM PINE (ILLAWARRA PLUM)

Podocarpus elatus (Family: Podocarpaceae)



Description: A magnificent specimen tree, the Plum Pine will grow readily in a range of climatic conditions and soil types but must have reasonable drainage. Suitable for coastal situations, plants are resistant to salt spray. Under cultivation, the tree usually grows to 8 – 12m in height. Growth rate is slow in the first 1 – 2 years of establishment.

Trees are moderately tolerant of frost but as for all rainforest trees, are most susceptible when young. They respond well to small applications of organic fertiliser, from late winter to spring, when they have their main flush of new growth. Leaves are dark green, shiny, narrow and very tough with sharp tips. The bark is dark brown, flaky and finely furrowed.

The Plum Pine can be kept as a handsome tub plant until 2m high, before planting out. This species is dioecious, that is the tiny flowers are uni-sexual and form on separate male and female trees.

The seed sits atop a swollen, fleshy, blue-black stalk to 2.5cm across, which forms the 'fruit' between March to July. The edible 'fruit' has a grape like texture with a sweetish, mild pine flavour.

Uses: A very versatile bushfood to cook with and makes delicious sauces and jams. They are particularly high in vitamin C and very high in antioxidants.

Witjuti Grub Bushfood Nursery

