

**Australian Food Plants Study Group  
ANPSA - Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)**

<https://anpsa.org.au/newsletter/australian-food-plants-study-group/>

Newsletter Number 68 July 2024 ISSN 0811 5362

**Leader/Editor: Sheryl Backhouse OAM  
201 Old Mt Samson Rd. Mt Samson Qld 4520**

**Phone: 07 3289 4198 (M) 0429 143 955**

**Email: [australianfoodplants@gmail.com](mailto:australianfoodplants@gmail.com)**

**Membership is open to all financial ANPSA members & complimentary  
although donations towards public plantings are very welcome!**

**Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000 Account 161 043 369**

**Digital copy only available**

Views expressed are the responsibility of the owner and others are taken from the web.  
Neither the Study Group, its affiliates, officers or members assume liability for information  
contained in articles or for any adverse effects arising from the consumption of food presented.

**Our recent visit to the Imbibis Distillery at Bundamba, Qld.**

<https://www.imbibis.com.au/>

**Photos taken by Leanne Hayes**



The food on the long black trays was contributed by Sheryl who made an Avocado Dip with Rainforest Mint vinegar and a Curried Egg Dip with Macadamia to go with the Ash Brie Cheese by Adelaide Hills. We also dined on Kangaroo Sausages and Pizza!



**This Gin uses the three Myrtles, Lemon, Cinnamon and Anise as well as Dorrigo Pepper Leaf, Coriander Seed, Angelica and Orris Root, Olive Leaf and Juniper of course!**

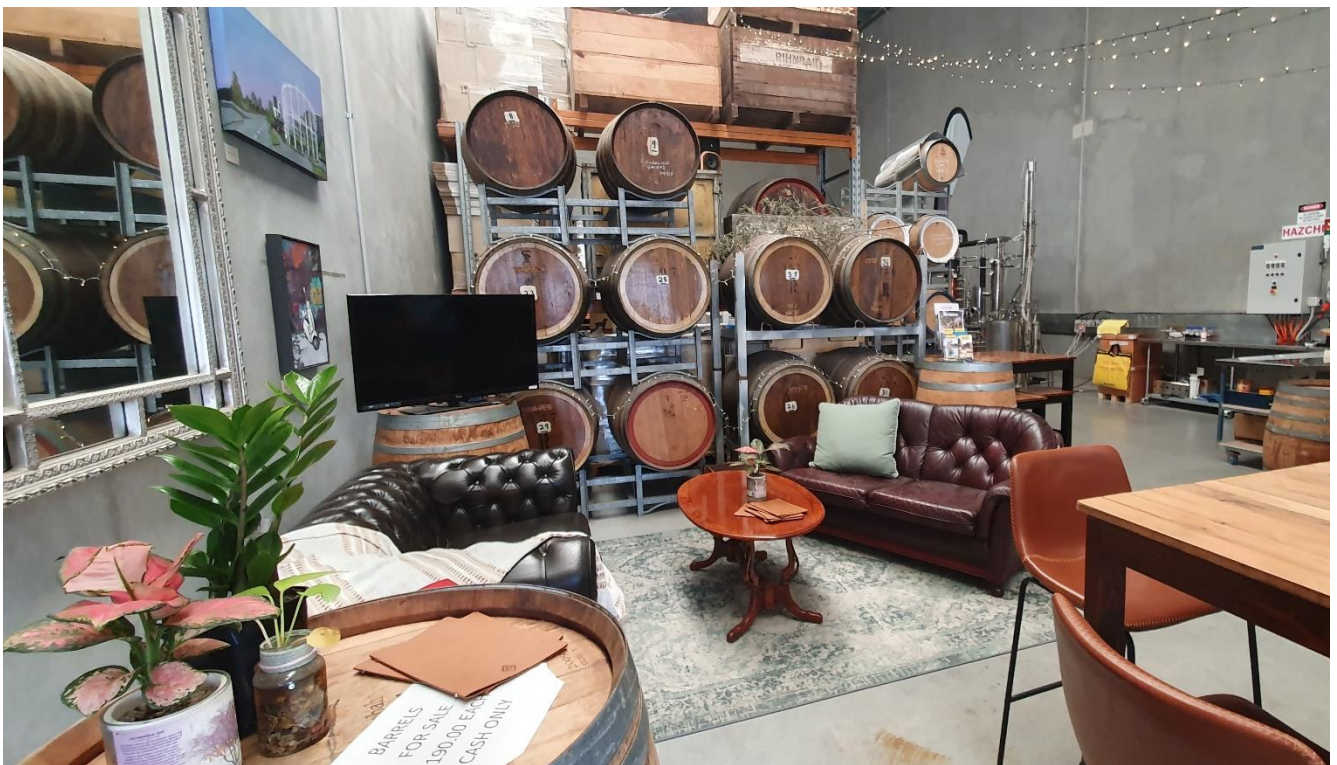
**We met new members Geoff Smith, Dr Rona Barugahare and Natasha Rutherford. Many thanks to Geoff for making a dip and biscuits using bushfood. Am sure we'll put Geoff to good use as he is a former chef!**



**Lemon Myrtle/Macadamia Anzac Biscuits** by Geoff Smith

Combine 1 cup rolled oats, 1 cup sifted plain flour, 1 cup sugar and ½ tsp ground lemon myrtle leaf and ½ cup crushed macadamia nuts.  
 Combine 125g butter with 2 tbsp golden syrup and stir over gentle heat until melted.  
 Mix ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda with 1 tbs boiling water.  
 Add to melted butter mixture and stir into dry ingredients.  
 Place teaspoonfuls of mixture on lightly greased oven trays; allow room for spreading.  
 Cook in slow oven (150°C) for approx. 20 minutes.  
 Loosen while warm, then cool on trays.  
 Makes about 35.

What a wonderful day we spent with Jason Hannay of Imbibis Distillery at Bundamba recently. He uses bushfood in some of his gins and we were able to taste test several...for those not driving! Anne Young's lemon myrtle biscuits and Geoff's





**Jason with his distiller**

**Avocado, Warrigal Greens, Pepperberry and Pepperleaf Dip** by Geoff Smith

Blanch 100g (1 cup) of firmly packed Warrigal Greens then chop & cool.  
Deseed and scoop one Avocado into a bowl, then mash and combine 2 tbsps aioli or mayonnaise with avocado.  
Add cooled and chopped Warrigal Greens to Avocado mix.  
Add Pepperberry and Pepperleaf to taste.  
Serve with crackers or on toast.

**Lemon Myrtle Butter Shortbreads** contributed by Geoff Smith

In the basin of your electric mixer, combine 250g butter (have butter at room temperature) with ½ cup sifted icing sugar, 1½ cups sifted plain flour and ½ tsp ground lemon myrtle leaf, beat on low speed to combine all ingredients, increase speed to medium and beat for 10 minutes. Spoon mixture into large piping bag fitted with star shaped tube.  
Pipe small stars on lightly greased oven trays.  
Cook in moderate oven (180°C) for 10 to 15 minutes or until golden.  
Stand on tray for a few minutes, cool on wire rack.  
Makes about 75.

**Sheryl** Glenn has a variety with much thicker tendrils than the usual plant so I've put in an order!

Scrambling Lily (*Geitonoplesium cymosum*) is a very common thin-stemmed climber of eucalypt forests, shady gullies, and edges of rainforests along the east coast. I'd never considered growing it until I visited my wife's sister Glenys and her husband Andrew at Mackay some years ago. Andrew had a specimen in a large tub on their old Queenslander's verandah and I had to look twice to see what it was. It was quite a densely foliated and very attractive specimen that surprised me with its form. It was around a metre tall, with numerous upright stems to a centimetre thick. Andrew showed me some of the same plants growing wild in his suburban backyard and they were quite vigorous in their growth.

I brought home a plant that Andrew had divided off as a single stem at the base of his tub specimen, and when I returned home planted it in a 15cm pot. Over the years I've kept it well trained onto a couple of stakes and potted it up as needed, until it's now in a large tub. It's now developed into a great looking specimen, densely foliated, with a large number of upright stems up to 1.5 cm thick and massed white flowers. An added bonus is the tips of the new stems as they point vertically up through the foliage, are edible and not just edible, but quite tasty. They're crisp and crunchy when eaten fresh, tasting very much like fresh snow peas with a hint of asparagus.

I've since been told by an NPQ member that the closely related Wombat Berry *Eustrephus latifolius* develops similarly in a tub when given the chance, so I've planted a couple of specimens into a pot and have recommenced the process for this species. The new shoots are edible as well with a similar taste to the Scrambling Lily shoots and the fruits have some edible white aril around the inedible black seeds.

As I wander around in the bush these days, I notice that nearly all specimens of *Geitonoplesium* that I encounter have had their new shoots chewed off. It appears that the wildlife (eg, wallabies, possums and grasshoppers) know about the tasty nature of this plant too!



Since the launching of the Conservatree last year by Woodford Folk Festival founder Bill Hauritz, one of several “pods” in operation, is focused on planting and caring for bushfood plant species. The recent March meeting saw over 35 plants go in the ground, with tree guards and bushfood fertiliser applied to each plant. The plants were purchased the week before at the Native Plant Market near Samford. Plants purchased included Finger Lime, Spiny Plum Pine, Midgin Berry, Peanut tree, Gumbi Gumbi, Greasenut and Lime Berry.

Apart from the huge range of plants for sale from 20 or so different suppliers at the market, patrons also enjoyed the Queensland Bushfood Association’s display with tempting snacks, presented by IPHA member Sheryl Backhouse (pictured). Sheryl also gave a generous donation towards the purchase of the plants on behalf of the Bushfoods Association. Queensland readers are encouraged to join us for the monthly Conservatree meetings at the beautiful Woodfordia site, with attractions such as free camping, swimming in the lake and the Folk Club which meets on Saturday nights. The bushfood pod in action It’s a buzz at the Native Plant Market, Samford Sheryl wows everyone with tasty bushfood samples and a bunya cracker. Conservatree meetings are held in the afternoon of the last Saturday each month. Those wishing to attend should register at: <https://form.jotform.com/232527333140850>



Sheryl wows everyone with tasty bushfood samples and bunya cracker



The bushfood pod in action

## **Native Foods Workshop at CQUniversity at CQIRP in Rockhampton**

**Sheryl:** I recently emailed ANPSA members an invitation to this free native foods workshop. I realised that the majority of you would not be able to attend due to distance so I asked if they could video it and send us a zoom link. Unfortunately, some of the presenters did not want it recorded so none of it was recorded.

Megan Hendry, Agriculture Research Extension Officer | School of Health, Medical and Applied Sciences, CQUniversity Australia, Building 361, Ibis Avenue, North Rockhampton, QLD 4701 [m.a.hendry@cqu.edu.au](mailto:m.a.hendry@cqu.edu.au)  
P +61 7 4930 9344 | X 59344 | M 0411 564 906 |

**ANPSA Biennial Conference 30<sup>th</sup> September – 4<sup>th</sup> October**

<https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/>

Blanch 2 large handfuls of Warrigal Greens in a large volume of water for at least 3 minutes. Drain and lay out the leaves on a towel to dry. Chop finely. Mix 250g plain flour, a pinch of salt and 150g semolina flour in a food processor and with the motor running add the chopped Warrigal Greens and 4 medium eggs. Add extra flour if the dough is still sticky or a few drops of water to take the dough from the meal stage. Knead a ball by hand for 3 to 5 minutes. Rest the dough for 15 minutes covered with a tea towel. Pass through a pasta machine and allow to dry. Store frozen and prepare as for commercial pasta.

**Bunya Pesto****Wildfoods Cookbook by Elaine Green**

In a food processor, blend 2 cups of cooked minced bunya, 2 handfuls of chopped basil and 2 cloves of minced garlic together. Gradually start adding olive oil to the mixture until it becomes a thin paste. Stir the parmesan cheese through and store in the fridge.

**Sheryl: Above recipes contributed by Natasha Rutherford...thanks!**

**Lemon Myrtle Shortbread****by Anne Young**

Soften 250g butter. Add 65g icing sugar, 65g caster sugar and 1 tsp vanilla. Add 65g cornflour, 2 cups plain flour and 2 tsp ground lemon myrtle powder (sifted together). Form into two rolls about 4cm in diameter on a lightly floured board. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 10 mins. Cut into rounds with a serrated knife. Cook in moderate oven (140c) for 20-25 mins. (I have also made the recipe by combining all the ingredients in a Magimix and then forming into rolls)

**Lemon Myrtle Scones**

Mix altogether: 3 cups SR flour, 1 can coconut cream, 1-2 tbsps sugar, 1-2 tbsps of lemon myrtle powder. Mix all of the ingredients in a large bowl. Put flour down on a surface, and once the dough is made, place on the floured surface. Begin kneading the dough. Pat down until dough is flat but not too thin. Cut out circle shapes or make your own with your hands. Place into the oven on 200 for 14 minutes. Serve with whatever jams or cream you want. To make the Lemon Myrtle powder, simply harvest a bag full of lemon Myrtle leaves. Wash the leaves, to make sure there are no critters on them. Then dry them off. Pop into a dehydrator until they feel crispy in your fingers. Then blend up in a blender (I used a nutri bullet) or food processor until you get a fine powder. It's normal to see a few larger bits of leaves. Store in an airtight jar. This recipe has been altered to use SR flour.

Ref: Facebook: Edible Weeds, Wild Crafting and Foraging in Australia.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/255804947779277/posts/update-i-fried-the-young-leaves-in-butter-garlic-and-herbs-they-came-out-crunchy/3619228254770246/>

## Salty and sustainable – an Indigenous food with business potential

A group of plants used by First Nations Australians as food, animal fodder and medicine could be a nutritious alternative to salt, according to University of Queensland research. PhD candidate Sukirtha Srivarathan from the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation (QAAFI) has found that edible halophytes have potential as a bushfoods business opportunity. “Australian edible halophytes like samphire, seablite, saltbush and seapurslane have nutritional benefits and bioactive properties,” Ms Srivarathan said. “They’ve been used for more than 65,000 years as food – especially during drought – because they grow all year-round. “They’re a good source of protein and most of them are a good source of fibre, minerals and trace elements, especially calcium, iron, potassium and zinc, while some also have considerable amounts of folate (vitamin B9) and vitamin C. “Now we’re looking at how we can use these plants in food production.”



**Sukirtha Srivarathan holding some halophyte**

QAAFI Senior Research Fellow Dr Michael Netzel said the salt-tolerant halophytes are a sustainable food source. “Halophytes have a lot of bioactive compounds, so it’s a more sustainable and healthy choice to eat as a salad or side dish,” Dr Netzel said. “It’s these little things; if you can replace something with something healthier rather than changing the whole diet, it can have an impact. “For example, instead of table salt you can use halophytes as a freeze-dried powder condiment.”



**Dr Michael Netzel holding three types of halophytes on a white plate**

The research was conducted through the ARC Industrial Transformation Training Centre for Uniquely Australian Foods at the request of a Western Australian First Nation community led by Bruno Dann and Marion Manson. Uncle Bruno said halophytes have long been a staple food for Nyul Nyul people in the Kimberley region, healthy mai (bushfood) collected seasonally by his mimies (grandmothers) and gullords (grandfathers).

Ms Srivarathan said she consulted extensively with the community during her research because there was not much western literature on the subject.



“They know these plants, it’s not new to them, so when it comes to potential applications, I got to know how they used them,” Ms Srivarathan said. “It’s been a two-way communication which has been mutually beneficial.”

“The combination of this native, ancient crop and our state-of-the-art technology is a really good combination,” Dr Netzel said.

When her PhD is completed, Ms Srivarathan will continue to work with the community to get a product into market and plans to co-design a dehydrated halophyte substance. “There has been high demand in using Indigenous edible halophytes for sustainable food production in the past few years, so this scientific profile will be a great help.”

Ref: The research was published in the Journal of Food Composition and Analysis.

(<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfca.2022.104876>)

<https://qaafi.uq.edu.au/article/2023/01/salty-and-sustainable-%E2%80%93-indigenous-food-business-potential#:~:text=QAAFI%20Senior%20Research%20Fellow%20Dr,dish%2C%E2%80%9D%20Dr%20Netzel%20said>

Ms Sukirtha Srivarathan [s.srivarathan@uq.edu.au](mailto:s.srivarathan@uq.edu.au) 0406 153 203

Dr Michael Netzel [m.netzel@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.netzel@uq.edu.au) 0400 887 072

QAAFI Communications, Natalie MacGregor, [n.macgregor@uq.edu.au](mailto:n.macgregor@uq.edu.au) 0409 135 651

Images: Megan Pope

## **Pink Flowering Macadamias**

**by Dr Bernadette Hawkins**

This was one of the things I saw when I was looking into the PBRs of Macadamias. Specifically, on Daley’s website it says "A trademarked variety of Macadamia. Propagation of this variety is prohibited." Pinkalicious is definitely a registered trade mark, No 1069552 and can be used by the owners on the following goods "Living plants; plants; natural plants". The owners are Yarrahapinni Nursery Pty Ltd and Trevor Martin.

A trade mark is like a badge of origin and is used to protect a brand. It does not prevent anyone from propagating - the only way to prevent propagation for commercial purposes is with PBR. Of course, you can propagate for personal use, even if a plant has PBR protection. So, the trade mark registration “Pinkalicious” does not protect only the pink flowering macadamia, but whatever living plant/plant/natural plant the owners want to sell under that name. Unless they have PBR protection, the pink flowering macadamia can be propagated by anyone both for commercial use and private use.

The PBR database has 13 macadamias listed. 7 are integrifolia, and 6 are integrifolia x tetraphylla. None of the ntegrifolia x tetraphylla have been granted yet, so I don’t know if any of these are Pinkalicious or not (they don’t use that name on the PBR database, just the codes HV A442, HV A447, HV A538, Hidden Valley A38, HV A403, and HV A376 (and they are all in the names of Margaret and David Bell trading as Hidden Valley Plantations. As you can see, due to the use of codes rather than trade marks or trade names, it’s not possible to know if any of these are what’s marketed as Pinkalicious or even if they are pink flowering.

**Ref:** Bernadette holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours, majoring in organic chemistry and a PhD in medicinal chemistry. Following her PhD, Bernadette spent several years at the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom undertaking structural studies of macromolecules by nuclear magnetic resonance. Prior to entering the patent attorney profession, Bernadette was a patent examiner at the Australian Patent Office, which provided valuable experience in understanding examination practice in the fields of organic chemistry, pharmaceuticals and antibodies. Bernadette registered as an Australian Patent Attorney in 2007 and has since been prosecuting patent applications before the Australian and New Zealand Patent Offices in chemical and biotechnology fields.

## A hard nut to crack: Future-proofing Australia's Macadamia Industry

The researchers are expecting two new cultivars to be ready for release in 2025. Future-proofing the burgeoning macadamia industry is the focus of a long-term breeding program led by researchers at The University of Queensland. The National Macadamia Breeding and Evaluation Program at the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation is using genomic selection in search for more efficient breeding systems for the nut. UQ's Professor Bruce Topp said the research team is breeding new cultivars that are more profitable for farmers and are using a range of methods to speed up cultivar release. "One of our aims is to improve efficiency by reducing the generation length or production time," Professor Topp said. "It took more than 20 years to develop four new cultivars released in 2017, that replaced the 50-year-old cultivars before them. "If we can halve the time it takes to produce a new variety, then we're doubling the annual rate of genetic gain. "We are expecting two new cultivars to be ready for release as early as 2025."

Australia's macadamia industry is expanding with 800 growers nationwide and more than 41,000 hectares of orchards. According to the Australian Macadamia Society, three quarters of the crop is exported to the value of \$300 million. Professor Topp said the program was also focused on tackling the impact of climate change on the industry. "In the past few years, we've planted trials in areas that are much warmer than the current production areas of northern NSW and around Bundaberg in Queensland," he said. "We have a large trial at Rockhampton in Central Queensland and another at Emerald in the Central Highlands. "We're selecting high performing individuals in these warm climates that will mimic what production climates may be like in 20 years. "Given that it can take 20 years to produce a new variety, we need to start taking the necessary steps now."

QAAFI's Dr Mobashwer Alam is also using an Advance Queensland Fellowship to develop a cost effective and fast-tracked breeding strategy exploiting unused wild macadamia genetic resources.

"With the help of AI, we aim to select gene markers that can be used for accurate genomic prediction for yield and plant size to directly benefit the development of Australian bred macadamia varieties," Dr Alam said. "AI can also help us select the best parents for future crossbreeds. "If this project is successful, we will be using only a small number of molecular markers which will drastically reduce the cost of genotyping. "If we reduce that cost from 50 to 70 dollars per sample to 10 or 12 dollars, this can bring significant genetic gain to the industry in a short time."

The National Macadamia Breeding and Evaluation Program was funded by Hort Innovation, using the Macadamia Research and Development levy, contributions from the Australian Government and co-investment from the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Dr Alam's project received an Advance Queensland Research Fellowship Grant.

Professor Bruce Topp; [b.topp@uq.edu.au](mailto:b.topp@uq.edu.au) 0427 682 384  
Dr Mobashwer Alam: [m.alam@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.alam@uq.edu.au) 0407 925 991  
QAAFI Natalie MacGregor: [n.macgregor@uq.edu.au](mailto:n.macgregor@uq.edu.au) 0409 135 651  
Ref: <https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2024/06/hard-nut-crack-future-proofing-australia%E2%80%99s-macadamia-industry>



The flowers of Macadamia "Home Beauty"  
*M. integrifolia* x *M. tetraphylla* hybrid  
Photo Brian Walters

**Maleny Botanic Gardens & Bird World** will launch its new native bush tucker gardens to coincide with The Curated Plate. The gardens have been curated in partnership with the Jinibara Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (JPAC) and Brush Turkey Enterprises. The Bush Tucker Experience will be held on **Sunday August 4**, and will enable guests to view bush food plants and talk to local rangers and producers. This event will encourage visitors to learn more about the vast array of bush tucker foods and their use while taking in the spectacular Glass House Mountains backdrop. Bookings and further information about The Curated Plate: [www.thecuratedplate.com.au](http://www.thecuratedplate.com.au)

**Mark Olive will give bush tucker cooking classes during Queen Elizabeth's round voyage to Tasmania.** Australian Aboriginal celebrity chef Mark Olive, affectionally known as the Black Olive, will host a pop-up restaurant aboard Cunard's Queen Elizabeth during the seven-night round voyage to Tasmania, **departing Sydney November 27**. Olive's waterfront restaurant Midden, on the western broadwalk at the Sydney Opera House, means 'shell heaps' and it is on the site where Australia's First Nations people discarded oyster shells a long time ago. During the 2,092-passenger liner's voyage to Hobart and Port Arthur, Olive will serve 'bush tucker' like bush tomato soup, braised wallaby shanks, barramundi in paperbark and pavlova with wattle seed cream. He will also give cooking demonstrations in the Royal Court Theatre, describing the ingredients he uses. 'We're proud to be offering yet another signature gastronomy experience with Mark Olive and know our guests will really enjoy his charisma, creativity and capacity to fuse native food and culture with contemporary lifestyle cooking,' Cunard President Katie McAlister said. <https://www.seatrade-cruise.com/food-and-beverage/australian-indigenous-chefs-pop-restaurant-aboard-queen-elizabeth>

### **Eat the Bush by Saltbush Kitchen in Ballarat Victoria**

Brigid Corcoran at Saltbush Kitchen creates sensory experiences. She highlights native ingredients in small-batch spice blends, rubs, salts and condiments that she packs in her store – a bright, textural art space inspired by local landscapes and wildlife. For Ballarat's Best Pie, Corcoran is bringing that same philosophy to her entry, Eat the Bush. A collaboration with Beaufort-based baker Sara Kittelty, **Eat the Bush is a sweet pie with lemon-myrtle pastry and wattleseed crumble, filled with natives like muntries and quandongs**. "Our whole thing is about showcasing how delicious natives are," Corcoran says. "People are progressing and starting to use more native foods in their kitchen, but sometimes the fruits people aren't as familiar with." Quandongs, Corcoran says, have a rhubarb-like tartness, while muntries are, "Like apple and cinnamon". You can snap up one of the fruit crumble pies at Saltbush Kitchen throughout August, alongside a bushfood hot chocolate.

In this final episode of **BLA.C.K. Medicine**, Dr Mikayla Couch shares an Indigenous perspective on plant-based medicine, as she chats with Bundjalung man and Gardening Australia presenter Uncle Clarence Slockee about the medicinal and health benefits of Indigenous plants. <https://www.sbs.com.au/language/nitv-radio/en/podcast-episode/bush-medicine/niak25qsz>  
BLA.C.K. Medicine is a health podcast for Indigenous peoples by Indigenous peoples, hosted by Dr Mikayla Couch. We talk about a broad range of health topics relevant to Indigenous Australians including medicines, common issues we face, closing the gap, awesome new initiatives, and how you can improve your own health. The C in BLA.C.K. stands for colonisation and its ongoing impact on Indigenous health. Dr Mikayla Couch is a Bundjalung woman from Tweed Heads and a gynaecology and obstetrics registrar. She interviews First Nations doctors and health care professionals to pick their brains on Indigenous health and learn from what they've been working on. Hear some cracking chats on men's, women's and children's health. Everything from burnout and mental health, to COVID-19, pap smears, nutrition and sexology. <https://www.sbs.com.au/language/nitv-radio/en/podcast/black-medicine>

Bloodroot is a native bulb vegetable, long used by the Noongar peoples of Western Australia both as a food source and to help with dysentery, mouth sores and toothache. It packs a spicy punch, akin to radish and chilli, and oozes a reddish sap when cut. A relative of the Kangaroo Paw, it can be found growing individually or in small clusters along the south and west coast of Western Australia.

The edible roots when eaten raw are very spicy and can numb the lips. Best baked or roasted, and may be pounded and dried and used as a spice. The compounds that colour this vegetable are unique to the Bloodroot, and were traditionally used as a red dye. Currently, they are being studied for their antibacterial and anti-tumour properties.

Bloodroot bulbs are ready for harvesting during August and September. They are dormant and slow growing. It may take a couple of seasons to produce a decent bulb. Prefers full sun, but may be grown in dappled shade.

Typically grows between 0.3 – 2m in height, producing clumps of tough green strappy leaves that turn black as they get older. From October to January they produce a distinct spike with dark purple-black flowers growing at the tip.

Ref: <https://tuckerbush.com.au/bloodroot-haemodorum-spicatum/>

### Notes from Marilena Stanton

This curious bulb grows prolifically on my son in law's bush block near the Swan Valley. Part of his property is being resumed by council so he is currently salvaging bloodroots - digging up plants and potting them up. The plant is quite insignificant looking from the ground up. Tall dark purple/black stems emerge from the sandy soil. On a recent visit, I assisted him digging them up. The bright red bulbs are quite deep in the sand and great care needs to be taken in digging them up. They seem to survive transplantation well. It is interesting how they appear as single specimens quite scattered across a landscape. One half of the property had none while the other half had many dozen.

I first came across the existence of bloodroot when visiting Hoochery Distillery in Kununurra. Their Arygle Pink Gin is made with many local botanicals excepting the bloodroot colouring with bloodroot derived from southwest WA. A bottle of the deep red extract was shown to us when we toured the distillery.



Paul Iskov from Fervor is an amazing WA chef who creates degustation food events using only native ingredients and mostly from WA. Bloodroot is one of his much used ingredients. He recently appeared on Adam Liew's SBS show 'The Cook and the Chef' and cooked crocodile leg ramen and bloodroot showcasing to a national audience. His food events are held in various outdoor and often remote locations in WA. A unique and passionate chef like no other in this country.