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*Photography by Frank Hurley*

*Blocks by courtesy of John Sands Pty. Ltd.*

**STYPHELIA TRIFLORA**

## EPACRIS FOR GARDENS

by F. J. C. Rogers

Victoria became the first State to officially recognise a floral emblem when on the 11th November, 1958 the pink form of *Epacris impressa* (Common Heath) was proclaimed by the State Government. Common Heath is widely distributed throughout the southern part of Victoria and extends into South Australia as far as the Mt. Lofty Ranges, into New South Wales to about the Clyde River and to Tasmania. It is commonly found on moist heathland and other areas which may be quite wet during winter but equally dry during summer.

It is easy to determine if a heath specimen is *Epacris impressa* because of the five small indents at the base of the floral tube. It is these indentations which give the plant its specific name and as it is the only species in the genus with this characteristic it should be easily identified.

Common Heath forms a slender shrub up to 3 feet high with many slender tough stems and numerous small pointed leaves. The flowers may be in a dense cluster or sparsely spread along one-side of the stem. They appear over a long period from May to November. These flowers vary from white through pink and orange to deep crimson. Plants which have white flowers are usually earliest flowering.

The growing of Common Heath in gardens has, at times, proved difficult because plants often do not live long. Better flowers and longer life can often be obtained by hard pruning. This may be done by cutting the flowers and using them for decorative purposes, or by pruning hard after flowering has finished.

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## PAST ISSUES OF "AUSTRALIAN PLANTS" AVAILABLE

Because of the vast wealth of our flora there is very little repetition of previous information. VOLUME No. 1, issues 1-12, no longer available bound but issues 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are available at 45c each, \$2.85 incl. postage.

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### Other Books by the Society

WEST AUSTRALIAN PLANTS FOR HORTICULTURE is the latest book by this Society available from the editor for \$3.00 plus 20c postage. The format of the book generally is to have simple but adequate descriptions (using simple features that anyone can distinguish) of three species in one genus with a full colour plate of one of them on the opposite page. Directions as to cultivation are given for each species. Hundreds of West Australian wildflowers are also described. This is the style of book we recommend and is excellent value at this low price. It is proposed to produce more in this series on wildflowers from other states if readers will support us by buying the first one, providing the money to produce the next one.

### "West Australian Plants"—A Descriptive Catalogue (2nd Edition)

This fine book was one of the first produced by the Society and has been so widely acclaimed and received that a reprint has been necessary. The number of colour plates has been doubled but the real value of the book even for those who have a copy of the first edition is that fully revised, it is the only reference ever produced to the entire flora of Western Australia. New additions include the grass and fern families but the many hundreds of species added and names revised make this book a must for anybody interested in growing the western wildflowers.

Available from the Editor, 860 Henry Lawson Drive, Picnic Point, 2213 for \$3.00 plus 20c postage.

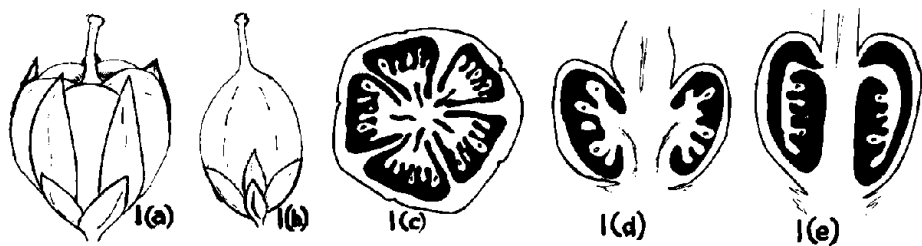
## EPACRID WILDFLOWER FAMILY

by Betsy Jackes, Townsville, Qld.

The family Epacridaceae, which is probably better known as the Australian Heath family, incorporates a large number of small heath type shrubs, some of which have a high horticultural potential. Most nature lovers will be familiar with the sharp leaves and tubular five petalled flowers common to this family. Victorians will be familiar with the "Common Heath" which is their floral emblem as illustrated on page 97. Sydney people may be familiar with the *Styphelia* as shown on the front cover. Widespread in temperature areas are the "whitebeards" of *Leucopogon* and colourful species of *Astroloma*. An outstanding Tasmanian species is the "Giant Heath" or "Grass Tree" *Richea pandanifolia* described with the other *Richea* in No. 39 issue.

Robert Brown first described the family in 1810 dividing it into two tribes based on characteristics of the fruit; the *Epacrideae* and the *Styphelieae* as shown in the sketches below. The plants of the first section *Epacrideae*, have been described in previous issues, especially No. 25 issue of Vol. 3 and in most issues since. The species have been described a genus at a time, just as this issue describes and illustrates in colour, the beautiful *Styphelia*. They are summarised on page 99 together with a simple key to the genera in such a manner that a beginner or student may follow it.

The second section *Styphelieae* is introduced on page 102 and all species of *Styphelia* are illustrated and described.



- 1(a)—a capsular fruit typical of the plants in the tribe *Epacrideae*. Note that the style is inserted in a depression on top of the ovary.
- 1(b)—a drupe typical of the fruit of genera in the tribe *Styphelieae*. A drupe is a succulent fruit consisting of a fleshy outer wall and a hard inner layer enclosing the seed.
- 1(c)—a cross section of the capsule of 1(a) showing several ovules that will mature to seed, in each section (loculus) of the ovary.
- 1(d)—a longitudinal section of the capsule showing how the ovules are attached to the central column (by placenta) at its centre. This is characteristic of most genera in the tribe *Epacrideae*.
- 1(e)—In three genera (*Richea*, *Sphenotoma* and *Dracophyllum*) the placentas carrying the ovules are attached to the top of the central column as shown in 1(e). For this reason some botanists place the two genera in a separate tribe.



































































































