

A Natural Dye Product of the South Coast of Western Australia

Meen

Bloodroot

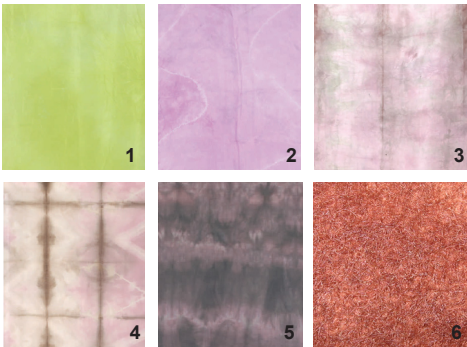
Haemodorum spicatum

General description: This perennial herbaceous plant produces a distinct black flower spike from a vibrant red bulb.

Distribution: Common on sands along the south and west coast of Western Australia from Geraldton to Esperance and inland to Kojonup.

History of use: Traditionally a food source to the Noongar people of the south coast, the spicy flavoured bulb was generally blended and baked prior to consumption.

Use as a natural dye: Highly versatile, the leaves, stem, seeds and bulb of the plant can all be used as a dye product. A range of colours and shades can be achieved with the use of different techniques/materials.



Photographs above: Silk dyed with the leaves and stem (1), bulb (2,3), seeds (4,5) and wool dyed with the seeds (6) of *Haemodorum spicatum*, from a selection of work by WA textile artist Trudi Pollard.

Availability: Not yet commercially available.

Research and Development: The potential to develop this species as a new commercial vegetable and/or dye crop is also currently being investigated.

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Information about this project: Southern Western Australia contains an extraordinary number of plants that form root tubers or related storage organs (over 150 species).

While the diversity of the flora is of international significance it had not been surveyed for new products.

This project has systematically assessed the horticultural potential of southern Western Australia's diverse tuberous flora and commenced commercialization of promising species as new crops.

This work is being conducted by the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management (CENRM) with funding provided by the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation (RIRDC).

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Australian Government
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This project may enable the development of new rural industries based on one to several species and provide enterprise opportunities for indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in the future