

Homalanthus populifolius - Bleeding Heart Tree

Family:

Euphorbiaceae

Common Name:

Bleeding Heart Tree (syn. *Omalanthus populifolius*)

Distribution:

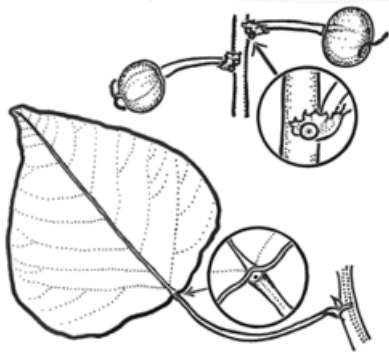
Central coast and ranges of NSW extending from the NSW-Victoria border north to far north east Qld. In HSC, Community BG1 (37.2 ha) and TI (295.0 ha) also occurs in wet gullies within other vegetation communities.

Derivation of Name:

Homolanthus, Greek, *homalos* meaning smooth and *anthos* referring to the flower. *populifolius*, Latin, foliage like the poplar tree.

Conservation Status:

An adequately conserved species in HSC. Most likely increasing. Self seeds in gardens through bird dispersal.



Description:

A small bushy shrub or occasionally a tree to 6m. The trunk is pale grey to brown in colour and smooth. Foliage is soft and dark green in colour, leaves are heart shaped and very large on young plants they range from 3 to 15 cm long, 3 to 12 cm wide; they turn bright red before falling from the tree hence the common name. Small separate male and female flowers are borne in warmer months between October and December on long drooping racemes. They are followed by a dark coloured fleshy two lobed capsular fruit, ripe in late summer, that has an explosive cover.

Longevity:

Up to 20 years.

Horticultural Merit and uses:

An attractive small tree with decorative leaves not widely used in horticultural applications, if planted requires a moist soil in either full sun or part shade. It is a useful revegetation plant which grows rapidly on disturbed sites as a pioneer plant.

Fauna Value:

Fruit is relished by a variety of native birds including rainforest pigeons, bowerbirds, honeyeaters, currawongs, orioles and silvereyes.



