

Bush-tucker tree!



Dioscorea transversa – family: *DIOSCOREACEAE*

NATIVE YAM

A slender twining vine up to 4m with an underground tuber

Tiny male flowers on spikes and tiny female flowers on racemes in summer; fruit an important food for hawk moths

Cultivation: Fast-growing if fed and watered well; hardy in full sun and tolerant of deep shade.

This fast-growing vine is found in a range of rainforests and Eucalypt forests, mostly in eastern Australia. It is a perennial climbing plant with an edible tuber that is said to taste like a crisp but slimy potato if eaten raw, and a waxy potato if cooked. It has alternate, attractive heart-shaped leaves.



The strongly-scented flowers are followed by 3-lobed fruit in the form of winged capsules containing flat seeds. They become papery as they age and hang on to the plant for months.

A decoction of this native yam was used by some indigenous people as an application for skin cancers. It can re-grow from tiny pieces of root and the seed is easy to germinate.