

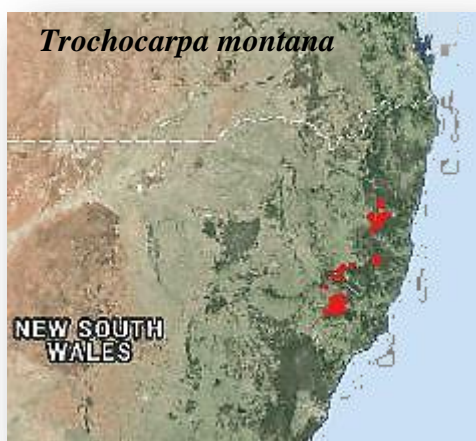
Trochocarpa montana

Williams and Hunter

Kingdom: Plantae
Division: Magnoliophyta
Class: Magnoliopsida
Order: Ericales
Family: Ericaceae
Subfamily: Styphelioideae
Genus: *Trochocarpa*

The Genus *Trochocarpa* comprises ~ 12 species with a Malesian distribution and 7 to 8 are endemic to Australia¹. Only two species are native to NSW, *Trochocarpa laurina* and *Trochocarpa montana*. The latter is a much branched shrub 2-10 m tall, locally endemic to the Northern Tablelands area of north-eastern NSW and all known populations are restricted to altitudes above 1000 m (Williams and Hunter 2007)². *Trochocarpa montana*

is usually found growing alongside ferns in the cool and wet understory of *Nothofagus moorei* dominated, cool-temperate rainforest.



Two specimens of *T. montana* were collected by Wade Tozer and the late Barbara Rice from Barrington Tops several years ago and planted at the back of the Ericales (*Rhododendron*) bed in the Biology courtyard. Although the spring foliage is an attractive red feature, there have been no flowers for Plant of the Week until this year! In the wild the flowering time is late September to October. November flowering at Macquarie suggests vernalisation (winter chilling) is required and so flowering is not to be expected every year.

T. montana has much in common with *T. laurina* and as the distributions and habitats overlap, it is not surprising *T. montana* was only formally described as a separate species in 2007. Small plants of *T. laurina* are very similar to larger plants of *T. montana*. A helpful table of the differences between the two species from the paper by Williams and Hunter 2007 is attached.



The small success with growing *T. montana* at Macquarie suggests we should try some of the other Australian *Trochocarpa* species notably *T. cunninghamii* from Tasmania or *Trochocarpa bellendenkerensis* from NE Queensland

- 1) Wikipedia
- 2) Williams, J.B. and Hunter, J.T. (2007) *Telopea* 11, 413-417
- 3) Maps modified from: Atlas of Living Australia

Text and photographs: Roger Hiller & Wade Tozer
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