Woody Pear

Scientific name: Xylomelum occidentale
Aboriginal name: Danja, Dumbung (Noongar)

About ...

The Western Woody Pear is native to Western Australia and is found in the south-west, near the coast from Yanchep to Augusta. The Eastern Woody Pear, Xylomelum pyriforme is native to the eastern states of Australia.

The Woody Pear was first described by Robert Brown in 1830. Xylomelum is from the Greek words xylon, meaning wood, and melon, meaning apple or fruit generally. Occidentale is from the Latin word occidentalis, meaning western.

The fruit of the Woody Pear are pear shaped, hence the name of the plant, and require fire to open, or for the tree to die.

Woody Pears are rarely cultivated, as it can take up to 20 years for them to bear fruit but the fruits are picked for the cut flower industry.

Aboriginal Uses

- Infusions of the leaves and bark were drunk to relieve pain.
- Seeds from the fruit were roasted and eaten.

Family PROTEACEAE
Climate Temperate
Habitat White and grey sand in coastal or near-coastal areas
Form Shrub to small twisted tree
2 - 8 m height
Dark, flaky bark
Foliage Oak-like leaves
Elliptical when the plant is mature and serrated when young
Flower Long, up to 8 cm, creamy-white spiky flowers
In clumps at the end of branchlets
Birak to early Bunuru (December to February)
Fruit Pear shaped with large woody seeds, two-winged seeds
9 cm long

Used as food Used as medicine Used as resources Local to SW WA

Caution: Do not prepare bush tucker food without having been shown by Indigenous or experienced persons. Some bush tucker if eaten in large quantities or not prepared correctly can cause illness.

Developed by SERCUL for use with the Bush Tucker Education Program.