

Nectar food trees and fleshy-fruited food trees in the Hornsby Shire



Why is nectar important?

Nectar and pollen from the flowers of eucalypts, banksias, melaleucas and other shrubs provide an important food resource for many species of insects, birds and mammals. These include a number of threatened species, for example the Regent Honeyeater, Yellow-bellied Glider, Eastern Pygmy-possum, Grey-headed Flying Fox and microbats.

About nectar food trees

Some native animals rely almost exclusively on nectar as food, while others use nectar and pollen to supplement their diet at different times of the year. Hence it is important that there is a wide range of nectar plants available throughout different seasons. Nectar plants are particularly important in autumn and winter months when other food resources become scarcer. Some of these plants may be considered keystone species as they provide a vital food resource during these times of the year.

Nectar trees in Hornsby

Some of the nectar trees are in the Hornsby Shire include:

- Swamp Mahogany
- Grey Ironbark
- Red Bloodwood
- White Mahogany
- Forest Red Gum
- Red Ironbark
- Broad-leaved Paperbark
- Hairpin Banksia
- Old Man Banksia
- Coast Banksia
- Heath-leaved Banksia

Sugar Glider
feeding on
banksia
Photo:
Roly Paine
NPWS

What are fleshy-fruits and why are they important?

Fleshy-fruits are produced by many plants often rainforest species, to enclose the seed for reproduction of the plant. They come in a variety of sizes and textures and are a key food of many native mammals such as the threatened Grey-headed flying fox and birds such as Topknot Pigeons, Bar-shouldered Doves, King Parrots, Bower Birds, some honeyeaters, friarbirds and cuckoos.

What trees produce fleshy-fruits?

Some of the trees in the Hornsby Shire that produce fleshy-fruit are:

Sandpaper Fig	<i>Ficus coronata</i>
Lilly Pilly	<i>Acmena smithii</i>
Port Jackson Fig	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Cabbage Tree Palm	<i>Livistona australis</i>
Tree Heath	<i>Rhodamnia rubescens</i>
Blue Lilly Pilly	<i>Syzygium oleosum</i>
Wilkiea	<i>Wilkiea hugeliana</i>
Scentless Rosewood	<i>Synoum glandulosum</i>



Selection of fleshy fruit
Photo: NPWS

