

# Peppy Plants February 2013

by Eleanor Bennett

This month the Peppermint tree, *Agonis flexuosa*, the plant that give the name to the place where we live, will be featured (see also [Agonis flexuosa](#)). The genus *Agonis*, comes from the Greek **agon**, meaning a gathering, it is thought this refers to the small, tight globular heads of flowers and fruits; and *flexuosa* from the Latin meaning full of turns, in reference to the thin stems which change direction at the nodes. Peppermint is typically a tree to 10m tall, but close to the coast, as can be seen here at Peppy, it is often a low shrub due to being wind clipped. The leaves are up to 12cm long and just over 1cm wide, often twisted with a pointed apex. The flowers occur in alternate globular clusters. The flowers have 5 hairy sepals about 2mm long, 5 white petals up to 6mm long and 15-25 stamens in 5 bundles opposite the sepals. The ovary occurs below the flowers, is 3-celled and in fruit be-comes woody. Peppermint extends from Perth along the south west and south coast east to Bremer Bay.



Some Peppermints are shrubs as they are wind clipped as shown in the photograph below.



Each flower has small hairy sepals, and 5 larger petals. Clusters of up to 5 stamens occur opposite each sepal. The ovary occurs below the petals and sepals so the stigma is difficult to see in the centre of the flower.



The fruits are in globular heads, woody and 3 celled as is obvious in the photograph below.

