

Peppy Plants October 2012

by Eleanor Bennett

Diplolaena dampieri, commonly known as Southern Diplolaena is the plant for August (see also [Diplolaena dampieri](#)). Diplolaena is derived from the Greek *diploos* meaning double and *chlaina* meaning cloak which refers to the double row of bracts around the flower head; and the Latinised name of William Dampier (1652-1715) the English navigator. Dampier collected plants from near Shark Bay which were the first Australian plants to reach European herbaria.

Diplolaena dampieri is shrub worthy of cultivation in home gardens. It is a shrub up to 2m tall. The leaves are stalked with the lower surface covered in short dense, white star-shaped hairs and the upper surface green with few or no hairs. The inflorescence is a dense, terminal head with 3 or 4 overlapping bracts at the base. The individual flowers are not readily observed as they are enclosed in the head, but the stamens and style exceed the head giving the flower its colour.



The dense terminal orange coloured heads can be seen on this shrub.



This illustrates the difference in colour between the upper and lower leaf surfaces.



The rows of bracts covered with dense to scattered grey hairs are at the base of the inflorescence. The orange colour of the flowering head is due to the stamens and style. The base of each stamen is hairy



The young fruiting head shows the individual fruits which contain 1-5 seeds.