

# Peppy Plants February 2014

by Eleanor Bennett

*Melaleuca raphiophylla* is commonly known as Swamp Paperbark as it grows in damplands and around the margins of lakes and rivers (see also [Melaleuca raphiophylla](#)). At Peppermint Grove Beach they are the Paperbark trees that grow on the dampland side of Hayfield Road near the Fire brigade building. *Melaleuca* is derived from the Greek *melas* meaning black and *leucos* meaning white in reference to the black trunk and white branches of some of the Asian species; *raphiophylla* is derived from the Greek *raphis* meaning needle and *phyllon* leaf in reference to the thin leaves of the plant. It is shrub or tree to 10m flowering in spring and early summer, with a characteristic papery bark. Swamp Paperbark extends from Kalbarri in the north to Ravensthorpe in the east.



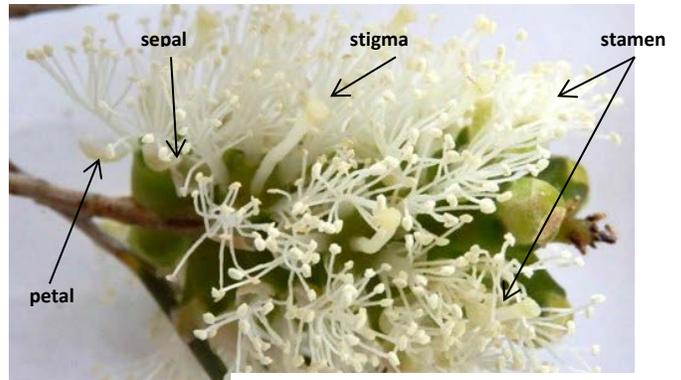
Tree of *Melaleuca raphiophylla* illustrating the characteristic papery bark.



Closer view of the bark, which as it ages comes off in long strips. The young, inner bark is pink-brown in colour gradually changing to the grey colour of the old, outer bark.



The needle-like leaves are scattered, 1-4cm long and about 1mm wide, each ending in a sharp point.



The flowering spikes are terminal, up to 3cm long and white to cream in colour. Each flower has five petals and sepals



The fruits occur in spikes. Each fruit is about 5mm wide. The tips of the sepals are retained in fruit.