

# Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens



Photograph: Roger Thomas

## River Bottlebrush

### Callistemon sieberi

#### FAST FACTS

##### Shrub

Family:	Myrtaceae
	Myrtle
Size:	2m H x 2m W
Position:	Shaded
Soil:	Well watered
Flowers:	Summer
Fruits:	Woody capsules
Care:	Prune

**River Bottlebrush** (*Callistemon sieberi*) is a narrow-leaved Australian native shrub from the Ballarat area that grows 1-2 metres tall.

**Location:** Plant in a shaded, naturally damp or well-watered spot amongst other plants with similar needs.

**Flowers:** River Bottlebrush flower over summer, forming a pale yellow 'bottlebrush' at the end of each branch.

**Attracts:** Several species of native butterfly are attracted to and feed off the copious nectar.

**Planting:** It will grow really well in your garden if planted in a hole not much larger than the pot within a few days of purchase. Give it a good ½ bucket of water as soon as you plant it.

**Care:** When the flowers start to look a bit straggly towards the end of summer, give the Bottlebrush a prune, taking off about one third of the length of each branch. This will keep the shrub nice and compact and encourage it to develop more flowers next year.

Also, don't forget to keep the water supply up, especially over the summer months.

**Seed:** When you prune the Bottlebrush, you might like to leave some of the flower stems uncut for a few months until they form woody capsules on the branches. These can be collected and dried in a paper bag to release new seed.

**Propagation:** Sprinkle the seed on damp potting mix, cover lightly with some more mix and keep moist until the seedlings emerge.