

# Plant of the Week

## *Quercus* *acutissima*

### Sawtooth Oak

In Australia, we expect oak leaves and acorns to look something like this:



However, there are more than 600 species of oak trees (*Quercus*) in the world, many of them very different from the European and North American species with which we are more familiar. One example is the deciduous **Sawtooth Oak**, which is widespread in forests below 2,200 metres across south-east Asia, China, Japan, Korea and north-eastern India<sup>1</sup>. It has become popular for parks and gardens and as a street tree. Sawtooth Oaks have been planted in Oakhill Drive, Oakhill (surprise, surprise!!) and if you don't at first notice the acorns in their exquisite cups with mossy bristles, the leaves could almost be mistaken for *Banksias*. The suburb could have been named for the totally unrelated native she-oaks, *Allocasuarina torulosa* and *A. littoralis*, both of which are common in the area, rather than for northern hemisphere oaks planted in streets and gardens.



The genus *Quercus* is divided into two subgenera, *Quercus* and *Cyclobalanopsis* and the subgenus *Quercus* into five *Sections*. The Sawtooth Oak is a true oak, that is, it belongs in the subgenus *Quercus*, in the *Section Cerris*, which includes the **Turkey Oak**, *Quercus cerris* and other closely related species from Europe and Asia.

*Quercus acutissima* – Flora of China

<sup>1</sup> Flora of China, Fagaceae, Volume 4, page 359.  
[http://www.efloras.org/object\\_page.aspx?object\\_id=2279&flora\\_id=2](http://www.efloras.org/object_page.aspx?object_id=2279&flora_id=2)

#### Text and Photographs:

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We thank L. Ray of Kelso who collected acorns and cupules (cups) for this display.

