

Plant of the Week

Thryptomene saxicola

There has been much confusion about the correct name for this lovely shrub from Western Australia. For many years it was known as *Thryptomene* 'Payne's Hybrid', more recently *Thryptomene paynei*, but now it is accepted that this is a form of *Thryptomene saxicola*, a species from the granite outcrops of the Stirling and Eyre districts of south-western Western Australia¹.



Thryptomene saxicola is one of the most popular Australian native plants and can be seen in parks and gardens everywhere. It belongs in the plant family Myrtaceae and thus is a close relative of *Eucalyptus*, *Callistemon* (Bottlebrush), *Leptospermum* (tea tree) and *Melaleuca* (including paperbarks). Crush a few leaves and smell the fragrant oils which confirm that this graceful shrub with delicate, tiny, pastel pink flowers is truly related to those otherwise sturdy shrubs and trees. There are about 32 species in this genus, all are endemic to Australia, most (24) come from Western Australia. Look for *Thryptomene saxicola* on the northern side of E8B, and on the western end of E7A.

¹Australian National Botanic Garden: <http://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/gnp7/thryptomene-saxicola.html>

Map modified from: Australian Native Plants Society, <http://anpsa.org.au/t-sax.html>

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