



Plant of the Week

# Waratah *Telopea*

In 1962, the New South Wales Waratah, *Telopea speciosissima*, was selected as the floral emblem of the state of New South Wales. This was a good choice, a spectacular, crimson-red, eye catching flower, or more correctly, a rounded cluster of many individual flowers surrounded by flame-like bracts. In fact the scientific name, *Telopea*, comes from the Greek, **τελοπος**, **telopos** – *seen from afar*. Of course, if you are red/green colour blind, a white Waratah would be much easier to see.

There are actually 5 species of *Telopea* in Australia. *T. speciosissima* is found along the coast and ranges of New South Wales, *T. aspera* in north-eastern NSW, *T. mongaensis* in the central and southern tablelands of NSW, *T. oreades* in southern NSW and south-eastern Victoria and *T. truncata* in Tasmania.



*Telopea speciosissima* in NSW.

The Government of New South Wales recently selected a new Waratah logo for the state. However, this logo has generated fierce debate, as many think that it looks more like a **Lotus** than a **Waratah**. What do you think?



Waratah ?



Red Lotus

Margaret Preston's famous print of *Telopea*. What is wrong with this picture? Look carefully at the leaves. Do they belong to *Telopea*, or do they belong to another closely related genus?



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Image of *Telopea* and Margaret Preston's print: [anbg.com.au](http://anbg.com.au)

Red Lotus: [Bluelotuslifestyle.com](http://Bluelotuslifestyle.com)

Map: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telopea\\_speciosissima](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telopea_speciosissima)