# COTTONWOOD

Alternative name: Cotton Tree, Beach Hibiscus, Native Hibiscus, Sea Hibiscus

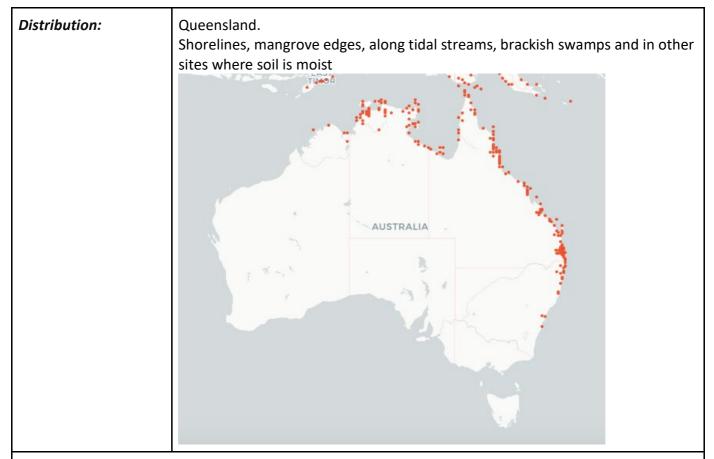
## FAMILY: MALVACEAE

SCIENTIFIC NAME: Hibiscus tiliaceus





Form and size:	Spreading tree to about 10m Dense, shady canopy with branches that often reach the ground
Leaves:	Large, simple, alternate, soft heart-shape or round in shape, 10 -15cm in diameter Adult leaf - Topside: dark green Underside: whitish with dense cover of hairs
Bark:	Grey, thick, very hard Mature trees may develop vertical fissures
Flowers:	Yellow flowers with burgundy 'throat' 5 petals
Flowering Period:	September to May
Fruit:	Light brown seeds from globular, hairy capsules Capsules split into 5 segments and 10 cells of seeds at maturity February to October
Ecological notes:	Larval food plant for Shining Oakblue Butterfly, Bright Oakblue Butterfly, Pink Spotted Bollworm Moth and other moths. Main native food plant for sap-sucking Hibiscus Harlequin Bug.
Cultivation:	Grow from seed or cuttings.



### **OTHER INFORMATION**

**Disclaimer:** Rotary Club of Capricorn Coast can not take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before ingesting any part of a plant or using a plant medicinally.

Australian Aboriginal people used the Cottonwood for many various reasons.

Timber: Valued for boat building, fish-net floats and firewood.

**Bark:** Fibres from soaked bark could be made in dilly bags, fishing lines, nets and ropes for dugong and turtle harpoons.

#### <u>QUIZ TIME</u>

- 1. How many segments do the capsules split into?
  - a. 5
  - b. 10
- 2. What insect sucks the sap of the Cottonwood?
  - a. Praying Mantis
  - b. Hibiscus Harlequin Bug
  - c. aphid
  - d. leafhopper
- 3. What is the general shape is the leaves of the Cottonwood:

- a. oblong
- b. tubular
- c. triangular
- d. heart-shaped

#### **ANSWERS:**





#### **REFERENCES**

CSIRO. (2020). Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants.

Melzer, R., & Plumb, J. (2011). Plants of Capricornia. Belgamba.

Williams, P., Kirkpatrick, S., Griffith University. Centre for Coastal Management, & Gold Coast (Qld.). Council. (2009). *Coastal Plant Pocket Guide*. Griffith Centre for Coastal Management.

#### Image 1

Osborne, J. (2016). Hibiscus tiliaceus (Coastal Hibiscus). https://www.flickr.com/photos/theylooklikeus/33043642842

#### Image 2

Starr, F. and Starr, K. (2001). Hibiscus tiliaceus (habit) https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Starr 010309-0520 Hibiscus tiliaceus.jpg

#### Image 3

Barritt, M. (2018). Hibiscus tiliaceus seed pods. https://www.flickr.com/photos/centralaustralia/30195919357

#### Image 4

The Australasian Virtual Herbarium. (2021). *Hibiscus tiliaceus*. <u>https://avh.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?taxa=Hibiscus+tiliaceus#tab\_mapView</u>