

November 2007



## Media release

### Blackburn South botanist authors book on plant names

There's little that Blackburn South botanist Roger Spencer does not know about plant names.

A senior horticultural botanist at the National Herbarium of Victoria based at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, Roger works in the Plant Identification Service.

The National Herbarium of Victoria is the Victorian State government's major centre for botanical studies in plant identification and classification.

Roger has also written many popular and scientific articles on horticultural topics and books on Elms, Grey and Silver Foliage Plants, and a recent five-volume Horticultural Flora of South-eastern Australia.

He and his fellow botanists Rob Cross and Peter Lumley have just produced a plain English guide to the use of plant names.

*Plant Names* covers the naming of wild plants, plants modified by humans, why plant names change, their pronunciation and hints to help remember them.

It also includes a detailed guide to web sites and published resources useful to people using plant names.

According to Roger Spencer, there is no equivalent publication in the English speaking world, and it has been well received by botanists at the Royal Horticultural Society and at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, both in the UK.

"The book is written in non-technical language and is an easy read for anyone with an interest in plants," said Roger Spencer.

*Plant Names* is available from all good bookshops in Australia, including The Gardens Shop at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. It has been published by CSIRO Publishing and retails for \$39.95.

#### About the Plant Identification Service

Staff at the National Herbarium of Victoria are available to identify plants as a public service. The service is open from 10am - 1pm each weekday. It is important to provide all features on the sample that will assist in its identification such as leaves, flowers and fruits.

The largest group of people using the Plant Identification Service is the general public although most plants come from Government Departments, commercial organisations, universities, and plant societies.

Plants are also identified for: botanical surveys; ecological, conservation and revegetation projects; weeds of agricultural crops and bush land; plants suspected of poisoning people and animals; possible illegal imports.

**Media inquiries: John Myers on (03) 9818 8540.**