



Callistemon

Common Name: Bottlebrush

Class:	Magnoliopsida
Order:	Myrtales
Family:	Myrtaceae – Myrtles
Genus:	<i>Callistemon</i> – bottlebrush

A presentation by Alisha Curtin

Let's get to know a little more about *Callistemon*...

- Commonly referred to as Bottlebrush due to its petal-less flowers and long stamens
- Native to Australia, grows well in USDA hardiness zones 9-11
- Evergreen dicot with a dense, multi-trunk that can be grown as a shrub or a tree with either horizontal or weeping growing patterns
- Shrub/tree varieties have moderate growth rate up to 25'-30' over span of 30-50 years
- Dwarf varieties have a slow growth up to 5'
- An intense allergen risk for those with allergies



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- Flower clusters attract bees and other pollinators providing sweet nectar
- Extracts from *Callistemon* are anti-bacterial, anti-microbial and have been used medicinally for many ailments
- Extensive matted roots are great for growing around creeks and slopes to prevent erosion
- Some varieties have sweet nectar and flowers that can be made into sweet drinks...other varieties are **highly poisonous**...so do your research about your particular variety before consuming any part



Color range of the *Callistemon* Family:



White



Yellow



Pink/
Purple



Red

Pests

- Sawfly itself will not harm your plants, but their larvae will cause skeletonization of leaves and defoliation.
- Scale insects can be hard to spot hidden on the underside of leaves. These cause pale trails to form through your bottle brush leaves.
- Web Moth, the most destructive pest to bottle brush shrubs, aka the webbing caterpillar, attacks younger foliage, webbing it together to form a cocoon. They can defoliate plants quickly, and one of their favorite targets is bottlebrush. If you see web moth activity, remove it immediately and dispose of it.
- Nematodes are microscopic roundworms, which feed on the roots of plants and in the case of *Callistemons*, causes a slow decline and death.



Disease

- **Root Rot** occurs if the soil is consistently too wet. Soggy soil promotes growth of fungi that cause the root rot, yellowing of leaves, discoloration of the trunk, dying back of branches, and can lead to plant death.
- **Powdery Mildew** is a white powdery coating caused by dampness on leaves where, yet another fungus can develop.
- **Leaf Spot** is a fungal growth causing a few spotted leaves. If the fungal growth spreads throughout the plant's leaves it can cause plant death. Avoid watering the foliage. Ensure the plant has plenty of airflow around it to keep leaves dry.
- **Stem Disease** is a bacteria that enters the roots but travels to the branches and occurs due to overwatering. Causes stunted, thin branch growth and can slowly kill your plant.



Pruning

There are two types of pruning that are commonly done for *Callistemon*:

- **Tip Pruning** should be done when the new growth is still extremely young, and before it's had the chance for the stem to harden in any way. As flowers will grow from these tips, you may sacrifice some flowers if you prune the stems too late. However, this will help you shape the plant.
- **Flower pruning** is done just as the flowers are beginning to fade. Neatly snip off the flower just behind the lowest set of blossoms, leaving as much stem intact as you can. This may spur additional flower growth from the same stem. You can prune to train your bottle brush plant to a specific growth pattern. Bottlebrush trees also work well for the traditional practice of espalier or training against a wall or building.



Pruning and growth habits



Pollinators in action...



Bottlebrush Tree Care



Water

Two or three times per week



Light

Sunlight for at least 5-6 hours in a day



Humidity

Prefers dry weather



Temperature

50 F - 90 F



Fertilizing

Applying fertilizer in early and late spring



Grooming

Clipping about two inches below the tips



Soil

Favor soil with a pH between 5.5 and 7



EvergreenSeeds.com