

Hibiscus heterophyllus

(Malvaceae)

Common name: Native hibiscus.

Localities: A widespread species, occurring at Brisbane River Bank, Grandview Rd, Kholo Creek, Moggill State Forest, Priors Pocket and Upper Brookfield.

Growth form: A rather sparse shrub or small tree to 6 m tall, with prickly branches.

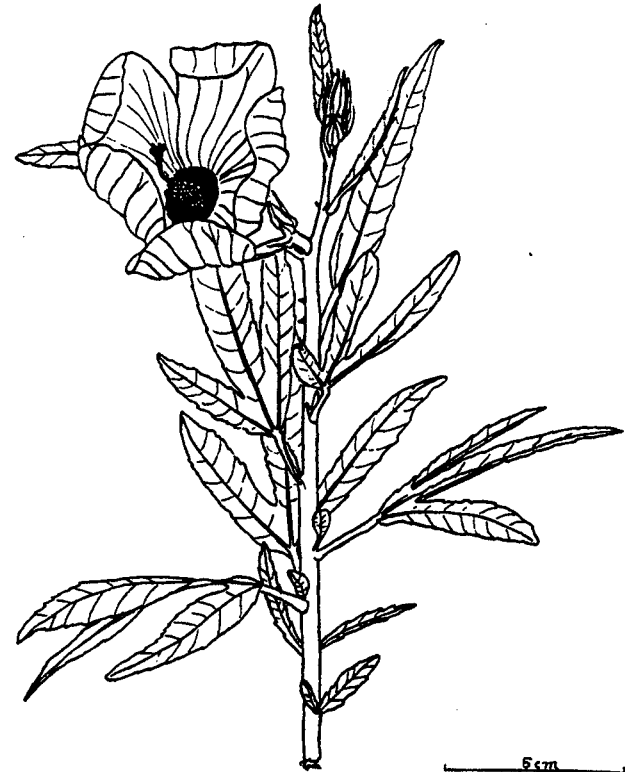
Foliage: Leaves are simple, rough-surfaced, prominently 3-lobed or without lobes, toothed along the margins, up to about 20 cm long and 10 cm wide.

Flowers and fruit: Flowers are large and showy, whitish with a dark red centre. The seeds are in a dark capsule, about 2 cm long.

Habitat: A common species in regrowth and along the margins of dry rainforest.

Propagation and Management: May be propagated from seed or cuttings. Native hibiscus is a very hardy species, which tolerates full sun or partial shade and infertile soils. It requires little attention once established and will spread naturally by seed.

General: Native hibiscus attracts lorikeets and honeyeaters. The northern form of this species has bright yellow flowers, and the two forms will hybridise to produce cream-coloured flowers when grown in proximity. Aborigines used fibre from the branches for making nets and dillybags, and prepared a decoction for treating colds.



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