

# Collection guidelines for common Australian families and genera

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This chapter is intended as a general guide with observations on some of the major Australian families: Amaranthaceae, Asteraceae, Myrtaceae, and Fabaceae. These family groups contain many genera that share common features and collection strategies, which have been determined from practical, field-based experience. Following this section is a more specific guide to common genera.

The comments and the collection information are all based on many years of hands-on experience collecting in Western Australia. Although some of the genera may not be Australia-wide, many are. The techniques and the timing for many areas are similar throughout Australia. To make recommendations for the collecting of species from every area across Australia would be difficult and this is not the intention of this book. The recommendations are intended as a guide to collecting and collection timing. While seasonal events are shared in many regions throughout Australia, seasonal variations affect different plant species differently and recommendations on timing for collection can vary considerably. It is up to the collector to assess the information, observe seasonal variations and make the judgement on when the material is ready to collect.

The regions of Western Australia covered in this chapter include:

- Kimberley – a dry, tropical area in the north of the state, with a dominant vegetation of grasslands and eucalypt woodlands. Some small rainforest areas, known as thickets, also occur.
- Pilbara – a large arid area, south of the Kimberley, dominated by spinifex and low woodland. It is separated from the Kimberley by the Great Sandy Desert.
- Goldfields – situated to the east of the south-west land division and to the north and east of the central wheatbelt and dominated by arid shrublands and woodlands. It is bordered to the north by the Gascoyne and Murchison regions and to the east by the Great Victoria Desert.
- Perth – the most populated area of Western Australia. It consists of coastal vegetation, some forests and cleared wheatbelt areas to the east.
- South-west and southern coastal – a region of tall forests, coastal heathlands, low mallee woodlands and sandplain areas known as Kwongan. This area contains the major areas of biodiversity.