

Medicinal Plant Images

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Figure 1: *Lavendula angustifolia* Mill. (family Lamiaceae; synonyms *Lavendula officinalis* Chaix ex Vill. commonly known as English lavender, common lavender) is an aromatic shrub that grows to between 1 and 2 metres tall. Despite its name, it is not native to England, but instead derives from the Mediterranean region, including Spain, France, Italy etc. The flowers and leaves are strongly aromatic and are frequently used as a herbal medicine, either as an essential oil, or as a herbal tea.¹ It is particularly indicated for the relief of stress and anxiety, and to aid in inducing sleep. Photograph was taken by Dr Ian Cock in the Barossa Valley, Australia, in February 2021.



Figure 2: *Pittosporum angustifolium* Lodd. (Family Pittosporaceae; formerly known as *Pittosporum phyllireoides* DC.; commonly known as gumbi gumbi, native apricot, weeping pittosporum, butterbush, cattle bush, poison berry bush and berrigan) is an endemic Australian plant which is distributed in arid inland areas of the Australian continent. Australian Aborigines used *P. angustifolium* as a medicinal plant to treat a wide variety of conditions.^{2,3} Decoctions and infusions prepared from the leaves inhibit a variety of bacterial, fungal and viral pathogens.^{2,4} A decoction of fruit was also used both externally and by ingestion to treat eczema and pruritus. Anecdotal reports have also associated *P. angustifolium* leaf preparations with anticancer properties⁵ and this species is sometimes referred to as 'Queensland anticancer tree'. Furthermore, *P. angustifolium* extracts have been reported to have moderate cytotoxic activity towards A427 lung cancer cells,⁶ Despite its range of traditional medicinal uses, the phytochemistry and therapeutic potential of *P. angustifolium* has not been extensively examined. One study reported that *P. angustifolium* leaf extracts inhibit Ross River virus induced cytopathicity by more than 25%, but are ineffective against poliovirus and cytomegalovirus. A more recent study reported broad spectrum antibacterial activity of *P. angustifolium* leaf extracts against a panel of enteric bacteria.⁴ Furthermore, a recent study not only confirmed the antibacterial activity of this plant, but also reported that *P. angustifolium* extracts potentiated the activity of tetracycline against bacterial otherwise resistant to its actions.⁷ Photograph was taken by Dr Ian Cock at Arid Lands Botanical Gardens, Port Augusta, Australia, February 2021.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declare no conflict of interest.

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