

Leptospermum seems to be a somewhat forgotten genus which is worthy of more attention. The name originates from the Greek “leptos” – fine or slender and “sperma” – a seed. The common name “Tea Tree” arose from an infusion of the leaves of aromatic species in hot water by early settlers. It appears that, unlike many Australian plants, they don't produce many, if any, epicormic buds which produce regrowth following pruning or fire.

**Botanical Name:** Leptospermum

**Common Name:** Tea tree

**Family:** Myrtaceae

**Origin:** Mostly Australia, one species widespread in New Zealand and two found in SE Asia. Eighty six recognized species of the sub family

Leptospermoideae of which eighty three occur in Australia

**Height:** varying on species and cultivar

**Habit:** Range from prostrate shrubs to small trees with fibrous, flaky or papery bark.

**Flower:** all have five conspicuous petals and five groups of stamens which alternate with the petals. There is a single style in the centre of the flower. The flowers may be solitary or in groups and have bracteoles and sepals which fall off as the flower opens. The fruit is a woody capsule.

**Leaves:** Alternate and entire, small and aromatic when crushed.

**Climate:** Cool to warm temperate depending on species

**Soil:** Most are found in nutrient poor soils. But in cultivation are tolerant of most soils, though many suppliers recommend ericaceous soil with good drainage.

**Aspect:** Full sun

**Prune:** In general they don't like heavy nor light pruning

**Drought/Frost:** generally frost and drought tolerant.

**Propagation:** via seed, cuttings and grafting.

**Pests/Diseases:** Small white scale insect which appears in fairly large numbers and affects growth rates. Treat the scale insects with white oil/neem oil spray in summer.

Leaf and twig webbers that bind a mass of leaves and twigs together from where the caterpillars emerge by night to feed on adjacent leaves.

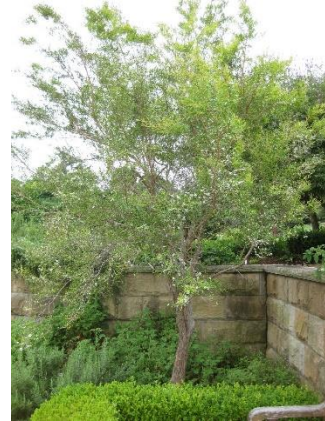
Treat/control with horticultural soap, horticultural oil or hand removal of nests. Unless a severe infestation the problem is usually one of unsightliness rather than one of major plant damage.



Leptospermum arachnoides



Leptospermum continentale



Leptospermum petersonii  
(Lemon Tea Tree)



Leptospermum scoparium 'Pink  
Cascade'



Leptospermum polygalifolium  
'Copper Glow'



Leptospermum scoparium  
'Red Damask'



Leptospermum scoparium 'Ruby  
Glow Manuka'



Leptospermum scoparium  
'Burgundy Queen'



Leptospermum liversidgei  
'Mozzie Blocker'

See <https://www.gardeningwithangus.com.au/> for list of good popular garden varieties.

Source: <https://www.anbg.gov.au/leptospermum/>; <https://www.agrifutures.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/A-Beekeeper%E2%80%99s-Guide-to-Australian-Leptospermum-Trees-and-Honey-ver-1.0-online.pdf>; <http://anpsa.org.au/APOL11/sep98-3.html>