

Plant of the Month - May

by Allan Carr

Geitonoplesium cymosum

scrambling lily

Pronunciation: guy-ton-o-PLLEEZ-ee-um sy-MOW-sum HEMEROCALLIDACEAE

Derivation: *Geitonoplesium*, from the Greek, *geiton* – a neighbour and *plesio* – near (because of its close affinity to the genus, *Luzuriaga* in which it was originally placed); *cymosum*, from the Greek, *kyma* – to swell, grow (presumably referring to the way in which a *cyme of flowers spreads outwards from the centre).



Leaves, buds



Buds, flower with native bee



Leaves with raised mid vein

Geitonoplesium is a monotypic genus (contains this single species) found in eastern Australia as well as Pacific Islands and Malaysia.

Description: *G. cymosum* is a wiry twining climber often scrambling over itself. It is usually found in shaded positions and has fibrous roots and edible new growth. In eastern Australia it is found from north Qld down through eastern NSW to Vic.

Leaves to 110 mm x 25 mm are alternate, shiny dark green above, paler below and have a distinct raised mid vein above several parallel longitudinal veins. Their shape can vary from *ovate to *lanceolate.

Flowers to 15 mm across are borne in drooping *cymes of several white flowers with 6 petals and yellow *stamens from February to July.

Fruits are black globular berries to 20 mm diameter with numerous waxy black seeds.

This plant is very similar to *Eustrephus latifolius* (Plant of the Month - April) but can be easily identified by its leaves with an obvious raised mid vein, non-fringed flower petals or the black fruits.

*ovate = shaped like an egg in outline, broadest near the base

*lanceolate = shaped like a lance, about four times as long as it is wide and tapering to a point

*cyme = a rounded arrangement of flowers where the flowers open from the centre first and spread outwards

*stamen = one of the male organs of a flower consisting of a stalk (filament) and a pollen-bearer (anther)



Habit with fruits