



KUNZEA AMBIGUA

Kunzea ambigua known as Tick Bush, belongs to the Myrtaceae family.

It is woody shrub mostly of the dry sandstone forest soils in eastern Australia, from the Grand High Tops of the Warrumbungles to Tasmania. It grows about 3 to 5 metres tall, with small white flowers in spring, which attract many native insects and bees for pollination. It gives shelter and protection to small native birds. Bandicoots have been seen to live under it too. It propagates from its small woody capsules, or by cuttings. It is killed by fire and regenerates from seed.

This was one of the first Australian species to be introduced and cultivated in England. It is a hardy and adaptable primary colonising plant after disturbance.

For a long time people have believed that its common name of Tick Bush was because it harboured ticks. It seems the opposite is true and in the last 20 years research shows that the Essential oil which is distilled from the leaves may yet become a most important and valuable medicinal aid for its many beneficial properties.

In 1993, John Hood, a Tasmanian farmer decided to investigate why his 35 year old boundary fence was not rusty like all the others of similar age. As a result he found that the wire netting was being protected by an oil from a woody shrub *Kunzea ambigua*, which grew beside it and brushed against the adjacent fence.

Mr. Hood realised that the oil must contain a fairly powerful antioxidant, and so sought further information about other uses. Accidentally, one day John spilled a sample of the distilled oil onto his hand and then happened to rub his nose. John suffered from serious sinus damage and a problem of a blocked nose from a previous industrial accident. The immediate result was that "it blew the sinus problem away". He then began a period of research and development culminating in the Therapeutic Goods Administration approving *Kunzea* oil for external medical use.

John Hood is the only distiller of Du Cane *Kunzea* Oil. A French physician, Dr. Daniel Penoel, who specialises in the therapeutic use of essential oils gives high praise to *Kunzea ambigua* Essential oil, and is further researching its clinical potential.

1998 saw the University of Tasmania finding that *Kunzea* oil was an effective killer of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics. Now Ducane *Kunzea* Oil is known to kill the superbug Golden Staph, as well as yeasts, moulds and other bacterial infections.

It's registered uses include: -

- * The temporary relief of pain of arthritis
- * Relief of the symptoms of influenza
- * Relief of muscular aches and pains
- * Helps relieve nervous tension, stress and mild anxiety
- * Temporary relief of the pain of rheumatism
- * Helps heal cuts and bruises.

Users of Ducane *Kunzea* oil have found it to be good for rashes and itchiness, for some forms of excema, dermatitis, under nail infections and leg ulcers.

Others have reported it to be effective in easing insect bites, minor burns and stings, shingles and migraine headaches.

I have recently spoken with John Hood and he is very keen for people to experiment with its use as a tick repellent and soother after tick bites. My own use of the essential oil when working in the bush has been favourable. Recently, I was in the garden without a hat and did not put *Kunzea* oil on because it was winter. I believe I had a few tick nymphs on the back of my neck. After applying the oil I suffered little discomfort or itching. Now I use it each time I am out as ticks are said to be at their most potent in the spring.

The oil can be used full strength, but I find that putting a few mls/drops on top of a small bottle of rice bran oil or on top of witchhazel is an effective way to use it. On a hot day it would need to be re-applied if perspiration is heavy. Ducane *Kunzea* Oil can be obtained on line from www.biodistributors.com.au

I believe in future we will come to regard this as a miracle household remedy, but we need to work with it and use it to demonstrate that it is so.

Prepared by Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame 23rd August 2014