

### 野牡丹 Common Melastoma *Melastoma malabathricum* L.

在春夏季遠足郊遊時，有沒有留意在路徑兩旁的草坡及灌木叢，經常都可看到一些漂亮豔麗，紫紅色野花？他們大多是野牡丹科(Melastomataceae)的植物，其中較常見的是野牡丹(*Melastoma malabathricum*)，開著由五片大花瓣構成的花朵。野牡丹是香港常見的常綠小灌木，主要生長在山坡、路旁及溪邊的灌木叢中。



野牡丹雖有「牡丹」之名，卻與有「花中之王」的美譽，屬芍藥科(Paeoniaceae)的牡丹卻一點關係也沒有。可能由於野牡丹花大優美，配合花朵中央的黃色雄蕊，較眾多野花更顯美豔，如同野花中的牡丹，因而得名。

野牡丹植株高約0.5–1.5米，全株被有褐色伏貼的鱗片狀毛。葉對生，卵形至橢圓形，全緣，寬2–6厘米，長4–10厘米，兩面都被短毛，有5–7條基出葉脈，不過若不仔細觀察，只會看到三條明顯的基出脈。野牡丹花期長，春至夏季是主要花期，花紫紅色，頂生，1–5朵成聚傘花序，花瓣5片，每片長3–4厘米，雄蕊10枚，5長5短，長者紫色，短者黃色。果實為壺形蒴果，長1–1.5厘米，外被有一層褐色的細毛，稍具肉質，有紫色汁液，種子多數，極小，果期8–12月。

除具觀賞價值外，野牡丹的花為蝴蝶及其他昆蟲提供花蜜，果實亦是多種鳥類和小動物的食物。此外，野牡丹亦有藥用價值，全株皆可入藥。

When hiking in the spring and summer, have you noticed those beautiful purple wildflowers blooming on grasslands and thickets alongside trails? Most of them are plants of the Family Melastomataceae. One of them is Common Melastoma (*Melastoma malabathricum*), the flowers of which is made up of 5 large petals. Common Melastoma is a small evergreen shrub commonly found growing at thickets at hillsides, roadsides and streams banks in Hong Kong.

Although the Chinese name of Common Melastoma means “Wild Peony”, it has no relationship with the renowned “King of Flowers” Peony, which belongs to the Family Paeoniaceae. Perhaps its large beautiful flowers complemented with pretty yellow stamens at the centre are more glamorous than other wildflowers. It is just like the Peony of wildflowers and hence the name.

Plant height of Common Melastoma is about 0.5 – 1.5m. Whole plant covered with appressed scaly bristles. Leaves opposite, ovate to elliptic, margin entire, 2 – 6cm wide, 4 – 10cm long, strigose on both sides. 5 – 7 basal veins, but only 3 of them prominent if observed casually. Common Melastoma has a long flowering period. Spring and summer are the major flowering seasons. Flowers reddish purple, terminal, 1 – 5-flowered cymes. Petals 5, each 3 – 4cm long. Stamens 10, 5 long and 5 short, long ones purple and short ones yellow. Fruit a pot-shaped capsule, 1 – 1.5cm long, with small brown hairs, slightly succulent, with purple juice, many tiny seeds. Fruiting from August to December.

In addition to ornamental value, flowers of Common Melastoma are nectar sources for butterflies and other insects. Its fruits are also food of many birds and small animals. Furthermore, Common Melastoma has medicinal value and the whole plant could be used as herbal medicine.

正在尋找食物的小蜂  
Tiny bee looking for food





## 毛蕊 Blood-red Melastoma *Melastoma sanguineum* Sims

另外一種無論在外型和生長環境，都與野牡丹十分相似的野花，就是毛蕊。兩者都有美艷紫紅的花朵，葉片都是有5-7條的基出葉脈，若不仔細觀察，很容易混淆。毛蕊植株較大，高1.5-3米，葉亦較野牡丹長，披針形，可達8-12厘米。毛蕊和野牡丹的最主要分別是全株被淡紅色粗毛，葉片的毛較野牡丹少及手感較粗糙，葉背呈紅色，果實披濃密紅色剛毛。



野牡丹的植株被褐色的細毛  
*Common Melastoma is covered with small brown hairs*



毛蕊的葉柄、花梗及花萼等都被淡紅的粗毛  
*The petiole, pedicels and calyx of Blood-red Melastoma are covered with light red bristles*

Blood-red Melastoma is another wildflower that looks very similar to Common Melastoma in both appearance and habitat. Both plant species have glamorous purple flowers and their leaves have 5-7 basal veins. They could be easily mixed up if not carefully observed. Blood-red Melastoma is slightly taller with plant height of 1.5-3m. Its leaves are also longer and could reach 8-12cm. The main difference between the two *Melastoma* species is that the whole plant of Blood-red Melastoma is covered with light red bristles. The bristles on the leaves are fewer in numbers and rougher in texture comparing with Common Melastoma. Leaf back appears red. Fruits bear dense red stiff bristles.



## 地蕊 Twelve-stamened Melastoma

*Melastoma dodecandrum* Lour.

夏季在草坡上會看到一些和野牡丹十分相似，但細小得多的紫紅色野花，它們就是地蕊。地蕊是匍匐狀的多年生草本或小灌木，10-30厘米高，莖多分枝，逐節生根，幼時被糙伏毛，以後無毛。葉卵形或橢圓形，寬0.8-2厘米，長1-4厘米。花紫紅色，花瓣長1.2-2厘米。果球形，長7-9毫米，成熟時深紫色。

In summer, we will find some purplish wildflowers on grasslands which are very similar to Common Melastoma but much smaller. They are Twelve-stamened Melastoma. Twelve-stamened Melastoma are prostrate perennial herbs or small shrubs, 10-30cm high. Stem much branched, rooting at nodes, covered with rough hairs when young, later glabrous. Leaves ovate or elliptic, 0.8-2cm wide, 1-4cm long. Flowers purple, petals 1.2-2cm long. Fruit spherical, 7-9mm long, dark purple when ripe.

## 細葉野牡丹 Intermediate Melastoma

*Melastoma intermedium* Dunn

顧名思義，細葉野牡丹較野牡丹細小，比較少見。細葉野牡丹是近似地蕊的小灌木，植株高20-30厘米，匍匐或向上。葉卵形或橢圓形，寬1-1.5厘米，長2-4厘米。花紫紅色，花瓣長1-1.4厘米。果球形，長10毫米。

As the name implies, Intermediate Melastoma is smaller than Common Melastoma, relatively less common. Intermediate Melastoma is a small shrubs similar to Twelve-stamened Melastoma. Plant 20-30cm high, prostrate or ascending. Leaves ovate or elliptical, 1-1.5cm wide, 2-4cm long. Flowers purple, petals 1-1.4cm long. Fruit spherical, 10mm long.





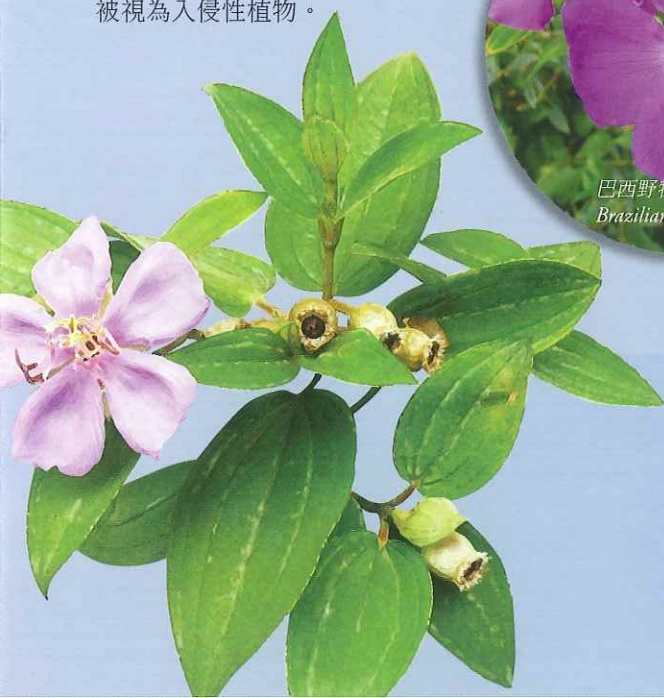
## 野牡丹科 Melastomataceae

野牡丹科植物原產於熱帶及亞熱帶，全球共有約四千多種。香港的原生野牡丹科植物可分為8屬14種。根據2004年版的《香港植物名錄》，野牡丹屬(*Melastoma*)植物有5種，但2008年出版的《香港植物誌》將野牡丹(*Melastoma candidum*)和多花野牡丹(*Melastoma affine*)歸併為*Melastoma malabathricum*，變成上述4種。其他本土的野牡丹科植物包括在草坡常見的金錦香(*Osbeckia chinensis*)、在香港首次發現的谷木(*Memecylon ligustrifolium*)，及罕有和是南中國特有種的稜果花(*Barthea barthei*)。

近年在公園常見到一些與野牡丹相似，開著濃紫藍色花的小灌木。這些植物一般被稱為巴西野牡丹或蒂杜花，是由巴西引進的*Tibouchina*屬的野牡丹科植物，包括不同品種或栽培種，英文名稱為Princess Flower或Glory Bush。由於花色艷麗，適應力強，花期又長，現已廣泛被栽植於庭院、公園等地，以美化環境。

野牡丹科植物最容易辨認的特徵，就是他們的葉子都有幾條非常明顯的基出脈。另一個特徵就是有特別形狀的雄蕊，例如野牡丹的雄蕊是五長五短和紫黃兩色，巴西野牡丹的雄蕊就如膝蓋般彎曲，很容易辨認。

野牡丹科植物對環境的適應性很強，耐旱，耐酸，對病蟲害的抗性亦佳，故此能在郊野比較貧瘠及酸性的土壤生長。由於野牡丹為本地的原生植物，適應力強，亦有不錯之觀賞價值，現已在一些復原植被及郊野種植計劃中應用。但在夏威夷，這些生命力強的灌木卻被視為入侵性植物。



金錦香  
Chinese Osbeckia



稜果花  
South China  
Barthea



巴西野牡丹  
Brazilian Melastoma



Melastomataceae plants originate in the tropics and subtropics, with a total of more than 4000 species in the world. In Hong Kong, there are 8 genera and 14 species of native Melastomataceae. According to "Check List of Hong Kong Plants" published in 2004, there were 5 species of native *Melastoma*. However, the "Flora of Hong Kong" published in 2008 has merged Common *Melastoma* (*Melastoma candidum*) and Many-flowered *Melastoma* (*Melastoma affine*) into *Melastoma malabathricum*, resulting in the above-mentioned 4 species. Other native Melastomataceae include the common grassland plant Chinese *Osbeckia* (*Osbeckia chinensis*), Privet-leaved *Memecylon* (*Memecylon ligustrifolium*) which was first discovered in Hong Kong, as well as the rare South China *Barthea* (*Barthea barthei*), which is endemic to South China.

In recent years, some small shrubs similar to Common *Melastoma* with deep purplish blue flowers could often be seen in parks. These plants are generally known as "Brazilian *Melastoma*" in Chinese. They are *Tibouchina* of Melastomataceae introduced from Brazil and may include different species or cultivars. Their common names are Princess Flower or Glory Bush. Because of their brightly coloured flowers, good adaptive power and long flowering period, these plants have been widely planted in gardens, parks and other places for amenity purposes.

The most easily recognizable feature of Melastomataceae plants is that they have a few very obvious basal veins. Another feature is the special shape of stamens. For example, Common *Melastoma* has 5 long and 5 short stamens which are purple and yellow respectively. The stamens of Brazilian *Melastoma* are bent like knees. They are very easy to identify.

Melastomataceae plants are highly adaptive to the environment. They are resistant to drought, acidic soil, pests and diseases. Hence, they could survive in the generally poor and acidic soil in the countryside. As Common *Melastoma* is native plant species, highly adaptive and with good ornamental value, it has been used in some re-vegetation and countryside planting programmes. However, these vigorous shrubs have been classified as invasive plants in Hawaii.





## 崗檢 Rose Myrtle *Rhodomyrtus tomentosa* (Aiton) Hassk.

夏季在山坡上開著粉紅色花的野生灌木，還有崗檢。崗檢與野牡丹相似，但雄蕊的構造有明顯的差異，崗檢屬桃金娘科(Myrtaceae)，雄蕊多數，及沒有彎曲。葉卵形，表面光滑。漿果成熟時紫紅至紫黑色，球形，可食用。果肉紅色，有甜味，種子多數。

Rose Myrtle is another wild shrub with purple flowers in summer. Rose Myrtle looks similar to Common Melastoma but there are great differences in the structure of stamens. Rose Myrtle belongs to Family Myrtaceae and has many stamens, which are not bent. Leaves ovate, with smooth surface. The berries are purple to purplish black when ripe, spherical, and edible. Flesh red, sweet, with numerous seeds.

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