

Photographing Plants

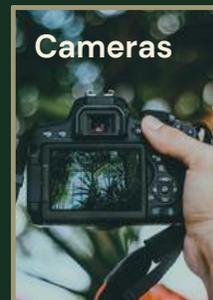


A pocket guide

Why Photograph Plants?

- Identification – including using modern citizen science tools like iNaturalist.
- Documentation – creating records for yourself (eg. a virtual herbarium) or for the Atlas of Living Australia.
- Appreciation, art, other expression.
- Social media – building a community of plant lovers sharing striking photos.

What to use?



Tips

Keep lens clean with a microfibre cloth.

Tap focus on the screen.

Use macro mode if available.

Avoid too much digital zoom as it reduces pixel count.

Use a higher shutter speed on windy days.

Consider learning manual focus as autofocus often struggles at close range.

Flashes, tripods and reflectors can be helpful shooting in low light.

Identification

- Research the key identifying features of each plant type, e.g. for grasses, often the seed head; for legumes (including acacias), flowers and pods; for eucalypts, bark, leaves and buds.
- Capture close up photos of flowers or fruit (if possible) and a clear shot showing the outline of the leaf.
- Wide shots of the plant showing its environment or habit can also help, but generally should not be the sole image, often multiple images are needed.
- Take a geolocation to support the photos, most phones include this by default, as can many modern cameras.



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Documenting and Sharing

- Tools such as a traditional key or modern AI image recognition app can help determining species.
- Hide or obscure the location of sensitive species.
- Learn about the plant and share interesting facts about it in the caption, if posting to social media.
- Have fun and enjoy the process!



Artistic Expression

- Tell a story with your photo, about its environment, or threatening processes.
- Look for dramatic natural lighting, especially at sunrise or sunset.
- Or use artificial lighting, to separate the plant and background completely.

- Get close, and show a detail of the plant that few people have seen.
- Look for contrasting/complimentary colours between flowers and foliage.



More Resources

Guide to iNaturalist

<https://www.ala.org.au/publications/a-guide-to-inaturalist/>

Kew Gardens Photography Tips

<https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/plant-photography-tips-garden-home>

Australian Network for Plant Conservation

www.anpc.asn.au