

Plant of the Month - January

by Allan Carr

Tricoryne elatior

Pronunciation: try-co-RY-nee ee-LAT-ee-or

common rush lily
JOHNSONIACEAE

Derivation: *Tricoryne*, from the Greek, *treis* - three and *koryne* - club, because the fruit is divided into three club-shaped nutlets: **elatior**, from the Latin, *elatus* - tall as this species is the tallest in the genus.



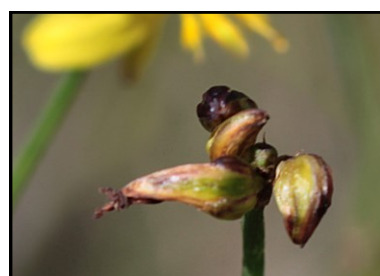
Flower + spiralled *perianth



Flower with native bee



Flower above, Fruits below



Tricoryne is a genus of about 16 species most of which occur in south-western WA. There are 3 species in south-east Qld.

Description: *T. elatior* is a small, upright, wiry, tufted, perennial herb to 80 cm with a short rhizome and fibrous roots in well-drained deep sandy or stony soils in moderately sunny to semi-shaded locations, often amongst eucalypts. They have multiple wiry stems that are round or faintly grooved. It is found in all states. Plants will re-sprout from rootstock after fire. It was first cultivated in England in 1824.

Leaves to 100 mm x 4 mm are basal and green to bluish-green but reduced to scales on the upper stems.

Flowers to 20 mm across are light yellow and lily-like in groups of 2 to 10 from September to February. The 3 petals and 3 sepals give the appearance of 6 petals. There are 6 prominent stamens that are feathery below the anthers. Spent flowers wither and spirally twist around the ovary.

The flowers usually open in mid-morning and close by mid to late afternoon.

Fruits to 6 mm long break into 3 parts when mature each having a single oblong, angular, black seed.

*perianth = the *calyx and *corolla of a flower, especially where the two are similar

*calyx = the sepals of one flower collectively

*corolla = the petals of one flower collectively



Habit