

Sturt's Desert Rose

The Sturt's Desert Rose was adopted as the floral emblem of the Northern Territory in 1974. It has also been known as Darling River Rose, Cotton Rosebush and Australian Cotton, which is probably a more appropriate name as it is actually a member of the cotton family of plants, rather than the rose family. It was named in honour of Charles Sturt who first collected it during his journey to Central Australia in 1844-45.

Sturt's Desert Rose is a small bushy plant that usually grows to a height of one and a half metres naturally, sometimes higher with farming. It has dark green, oval-shaped leaves and the petals of the flowers are mauve, with deep red markings at the centre. Its flowers are similar to those of the Hibiscus, which are in the same plant family.



Sturt's Desert Rose is an arid-zone plant which grows best in dry regions on stony or rocky sloping ground or in dry creek beds. It is found in the southern part of the Northern Territory. Residents of Alice Springs often grow it as a garden shrub. It also is found in parts of South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland.