



INDIGENOUS GARDEN

Doryanthes excelsa (Gynea Lily)

Indigenous use

Aboriginal people roasted the young stems of Gynea Lily for eating when they were 0.5m long and as thick as a man's arm. They also roasted the roots to make a kind of cake. Fibres from the leaves were used for making brushes and matting.

Description

Doryanthes excelsa is an Indigenous plant to the Sydney Basin and a truly iconic plant of the Australian bush. The botanic name, 'Doryanthes', derives from two Greek words - 'dory', meaning spear, and 'anthos', meaning flower and this refers to the beacon-like flower heads that stand out in the bush. They have big spectacular flower heads, and also clumps of luxurious green leaves that make a fabulous feature in the landscape. This plant is also known as flame lily, giant lily, giant spear lily, but most commonly it's known as the Gynea lily.



Habitat

Doryanthes excelsa occurs in woodland and dry sclerophyll forest in coastal areas and adjacent mountains from Karuah to Mt Keira, New South Wales. It usually grows in soils derived from sandstone.