



## ***Australia's Floral Emblem***

***The golden wattle, *Acacia pycnantha*, Australia's national floral emblem, encapsulates the spirit of the Australian bush. The shrub or small tree grows in the understorey of open forest, woodland and in open scrub in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.***

***Like all emblems and symbols, the golden wattle captures an essence of Australia that brings the colours, smells and textures of the Australian bush alive.***

***The flower has long been recognised as Australia's premier floral symbol and was officially proclaimed in 1988. In 1912, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, the Hon. Andrew Fisher MP, wattle was included as the decoration surrounding the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and it has also been used in the design of Australian stamps and many awards in the Australian honours system.***

***Golden wattle was honoured further with the proclamation in 1992 that 1 September in each year be observed as National Wattle Day. This day provides an opportunity for all Australians to celebrate our floral heritage, particularly through the planting of an *Acacia* species suitable for the area in which they live.***

## **National coat of arms**



***The national coat of arms includes all the state badges under the seven-pointed star, symbolising the unity of the states and Commonwealth. It is supported by the emu and kangaroo.***

***Usually the Arms are depicted with branches of wattle tied with ribbon, emblematic of Australia, and a scroll with the word 'Australia' at the base. These do not constitute part of the complete Armorial Achievement and are not mentioned in the Royal Warrant.***



## ***New South Wales Flag***

***The New South Wales State flag has been in use since 1876. It includes the Union Jack and the NSW badge. The badge consists of the Cross of St George in red on a white disc with an eight-pointed gold star on each arm and a golden lion in the centre.***

***The badge was designed by James Barnet, the Colonial Architect, and Captain Francis Hixson, Royal Navy, who was president of the Marine Board.***

***Many organisations fly the NSW flag as a mark of respect. There are protocols for flying and storing the flag***

## ***Animal Emblem: Platypus***



***The animal emblem of New South Wales is the Platypus (Ornithorhynchus anatinus). It is one of two egg-laying mammals or monotremes only found in the Australasian region (the other is the echidna). It lives in rivers and streams and is well adapted to life in the water with its close fur, webbed feet and duck-like bill.***

***It feeds on freshwater yabbies, worms, insects and their larvae and snails, nosing in the gravel with its sensitive bill. The adult male has a poison spur on the heel of each hind foot.***

***Originally hunted for their fur, platypuses have been protected since the 1920s.***

## ***Bird Emblem: Kookaburra***



***The Kookaburra (Dacelo novaeguineae) is the bird emblem of New South Wales. This great brown kingfisher is sometimes called a 'laughing jackass' because of its distinctive territorial laughing call. Meat eaters, they hunt snakes, lizards, fish and insects. They live at forest edges, in clearings and open woodland country and have adapted well to life in our towns and suburbs.***

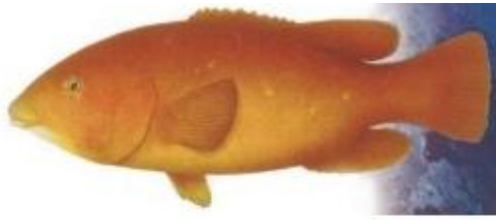
## **Floral Emblem: Waratah**



***The waratah (Telopea speciosissima) is the floral emblem of New South Wales. It is a stout, erect shrub which may grow to four metres. The flowers are grouped in rounded heads 7-10 cm in diameter surrounded by crimson bracts. It flowers from September to November.***

***The Waratah is fairly widespread on the central coast and adjoining mountains of New South Wales. It grows mainly in the shrub understorey in open forest and also now flourishes in gardens. In Aboriginal myth, the Waratah was much loved by the hunter Warnili. When he was struck blind by lightning, the Kwinis, tiny bush spirits, made the Waratah more rigid so the blind hunter could distinguish it by touch.***

## ***Fish emblem: Blue Groper***



***The Blue Groper (*Achoerodus viridis*) was proclaimed the State fish of New South Wales in 2002. Males are blue, females are reddish brown and juveniles are green. Adults can reach a length of 1.2m and weigh up to 50kg. They are found among the rocky reefs along the east coast of Australia, from southern Queensland to Wilson's promontory in Victoria and feed on molluscs and crustaceans. An inquisitive fish, they are easily caught and have been extensively fished.***