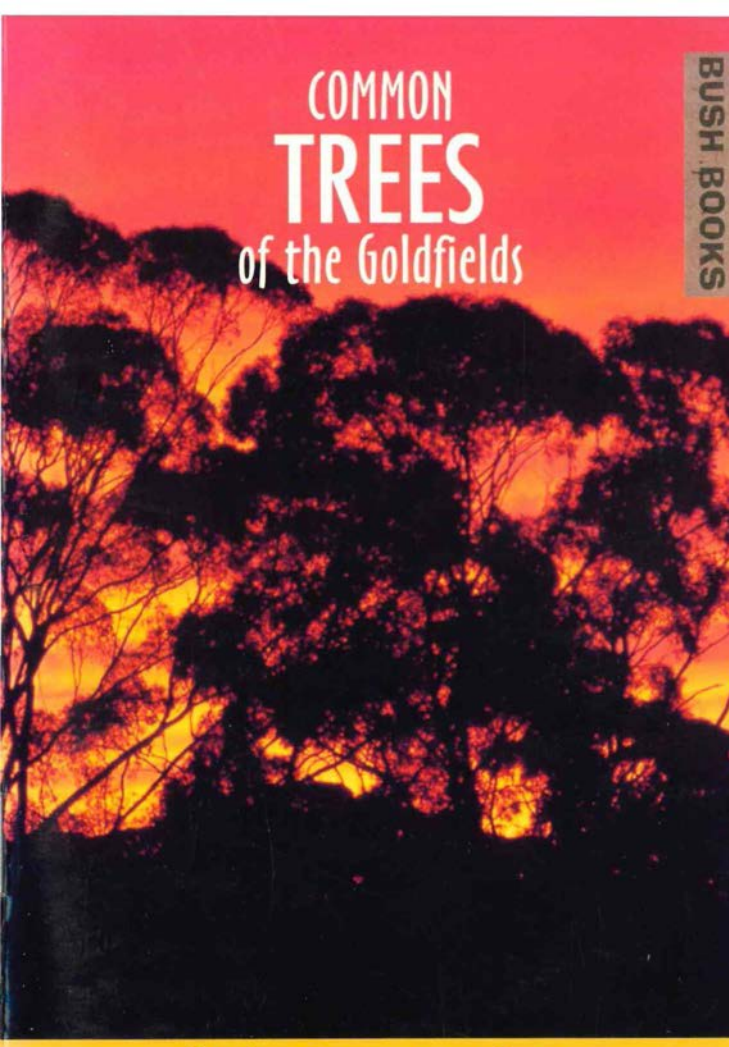
COMMON TREES of the Goldfields

BUSH BOOKS



What tree is that?

Bush Books are a series of practical field guides to help you learn about and discover WA's unique plants, animals and special features, region by region.

Publisher: Dr Syd Shea, Executive Director, Department of Conservation and Land Management, 50 Hayman Road, Como, Western Australia 6152.

Managing Editor: Ron Kawalilak.

Editor: Carolyn Thomson.

Technical Advisers: Ian Kealley, Greg Keighery and Neville Marchant.

Design: Robyn Mundy.

Editorial Assistance: Verna Costello.

Front cover: Salmon gum woodlands. Photo by Jiri Lochman.

ISBN 07309-6861-8

COMMON TREES of the Goldfields

by Grant Pronk

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Bush Books are a series of practical field guides to help you learn about and discover WA's unique plants, animals and special features, region by region.

Publisher: Dr Syd Shea, Executive Director, Department of Conservation and Land Management, 50 Hayman Road, Como, Western Australia 6152.

Managing Editor: Ron Kawalilak.

Editor: Carolyn Thomson.

Technical Advisers: Ian Kealley, Greg Keighery and Neville Marchant.

Design: Robyn Mundy.

Editorial Assistance: Verna Costello.

Front cover: Salmon gum woodlands. Photo by Jiri Lochman.

ISBN 07309-6861-8

COMMON TREES of the Goldfields

by Grant Pronk

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Think of the forests in Western Australia and you picture the green south-west; think of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and you conjure up gold, not trees. But it was the trees that provided massive quantities of fuel needed to keep the mines going and timber to support underground shafts. Before long, huge areas of woodlands in the Goldfields were cut out. Today, with few exceptions, the old cutting areas have regenerated back to their former glory, and healthy woodlands extend as far as the eye can see to the north, south, east and west of Kalgoorlie.

The Goldfields is a land of surprising contrasts. Tall eucalypts tower over the ancient red soils. An array of colours created by masses of blossom, bark and foliage splash over the dry landscape, providing a visual delight. Nowhere else in the world will one find such a diversity of tall trees in such an arid climate. Of about 500 eucalypt species in Australia, roughly 16 per cent (about 80 species) occur in the Goldfields. Of those, 34 grow only in the Goldfields, making the area very rich in eucalypts. There are numerous other tree species as well.

This book includes a selection of trees commonly found in the Goldfields. Most of the species can be seen along the main roads of the Goldfields. The area covered extends from the edge of the Wheatbelt, east through the woodlands to the Nullarbor Plain and the Great Victoria Desert. Many of the species described here also occur elsewhere.

Opposite: *Marble Gum*

Photo - Grant Pronk

TIMBER FROM GOLDFIELD TREES

Goldfields specialty timbers are attracting keen interest nationally and internationally for their unique and versatile characteristics. Their decorative features, coupled with their strength, density and durability, have seen exciting developments in an assortment of uses.

Various components of several woodwind instruments, the double bass and other stringed instruments are being trialed, using both Goldfields eucalypts and acacia species. The many impressive attributes of these timbers have even attracted the interest of grand piano manufacturers. Private research and trials have seen the successful sawing, seasoning and establishment of fine grade furniture, parquetry flooring and craft items using Goldfields timbers.

Below: *Mulga (left), pixie bush (right)*

Above: *Gimlet (left), coral gum (right)*
Below: *Boree (left), flame grevillea (right)*

...s - Jiri Lochman

BLACK OAK

(Casuarina pauper)

Family Casuarinaceae, the sheoaks

The timber of black oak, and other sheoaks, is similar to that of true oaks (*Quercus* species). Being drought and frost resistant, with moderate tolerance to salt, black oak is often used as a windbreak tree on farmland. It is also an attractive ornamental.

DESCRIPTION: Without surrounding competition, black oak can attain a respectable height of 16 metres, with a trunk diameter of around 60 centimetres. In less favourable conditions, it is often considerably smaller. Rough, dark bark covers the tree to the branchlets. The green branchlets are often mistaken for the leaves, however between nine and 11 tiny scale-like leaves form a ring around each segment of the branchlets. Black oaks produce either male or female flowers, with the small male flowers on spike-like projections from the end of the branchlets. Female flowers form a grey, rounded cone around 30 millimetres long and 25 millimetres wide. Each cone contains between nine and 16 flowers.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: This mostly tall tree has dark, rough bark and needle-like leaves. Female plants have characteristic sheoak-style cones.

HABITAT: Black oak grows in calcrete, rocky hills, red sandy soils near salt lakes and alkaline soils throughout the Goldfields, in water-gaining areas. It often associates with native willow.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree covers most of the Goldfields and east to the Great Victoria Desert and the Nullarbor. It is also found in the other southern states of mainland Australia.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering depends on favourable seasonal conditions, but is usually between July and September.

USES: The timber was once used for fencing. Today it is gaining increasing interest from craft timber workers. This interest includes using the timber for woodwind instruments.

Photo - Grant Pronk

WHITE CYPRESS PINE

(Callitris glaucophylla)

Family Cupressaceae, the cypresses

White cypress pine, though not a true pine, has many similar characteristics. This erect tree produces cones and also has a similar form to many true pines, and you can smell a strong pine-like aroma when the bluish-green foliage is crushed or the timber is cut. This tree usually grows in small to medium-sized stands, but pure white cypress pine woodlands are scattered throughout its distribution.

DESCRIPTION: White cypress pine usually consists of a single trunk and several long erect branches. Trees can reach 12 metres. The rough, furrowed bark is a dark grey. What appears to be the bluish-green leaves are actually branchlets. The leaves are represented as tiny scales arranged in whorls on these branchlets. Individual trees have both the inconspicuous female and male flowers. The male flower is a small spike located on the ends of the branchlets. Woody cones comprised of six segments and 20 millimetres in diameter hold the seed.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: White cypress pine is the larger of the two species of *Callitris* in the Goldfields and has a strong pine-like aroma when its foliage is crushed. Goldfields cypress pine (*Callitris preissii* var. *verrucosa*) is smaller, has only a mild fragrance and usually grows in deep yellow sands.

HABITAT: White cypress pine prefers sandy soils.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree grows through most of semi-arid WA, from the northern Pilbara to the southern Goldfields, including Shark Bay.

USES: The fragrant oils within the timber appear to prevent termite invasion, and as a result it has been used for house stumps and fencing. The attractive grain found within the soft timber has recently attracted the attention of craftspeople.

Photos - Grant Pronk

NATIVE POPLAR

(Codonocarpus cotinifolius)

Family Gyrostemonaceae

As its common name suggests, native poplar resembles the poplar trees found in Europe. It is a fast-growing, short-lived tree which grows in areas where the soil has been disturbed. Large numbers can occur on disturbed sandy soils and in recently burnt areas. Adult native poplar trees have either male or female flowers.

DESCRIPTION: This tall slender tree grows up to eight metres high. The trunk tapers to a point and the lower branches are thin, short and almost horizontal. The smooth bark is mostly greyish at the base, changing to a pinkish or even green colour further up the trunk. Broad leaves, about 50 millimetres long, are a dull green colour with a waxy finish. Both the male and female flowers are arranged on stalks at the ends of the branchlets. Bell-shaped, segmented fruits, 16 millimetres long by 10 millimetres wide, contain a single seed.

OTHER NAMES: Mustard tree, desert poplar, bell fruit, bell fruit tree, horseradish tree, kundurangu.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Native poplar has a vertical habit, similar to the European poplar, and small, bell-shaped fruits.

HABITAT: In the Goldfields, native poplar grows mostly on sandy soils. Any soil disturbance or fire can promote the prolific germination of this tree from its long-lived hard seed.

DISTRIBUTION: Native poplar has a large distribution which covers all of the State apart from the south-west corner and the Kimberley. This tree is common throughout Australia's drier regions.

FLOWERING TIME: September to December, after good rains.

USES: The bark is claimed to have medicinal properties. The plant, however, is probably toxic.

Photo - Grant Pronk

JAM

(Acacia acuminata)

Family Mimosaceae, the wattles

When freshly cut, the heartwood of this wattle has a fragrance similar to that of raspberry jam, hence the unusual common name, which was given to the tree by early timber cutters. Jam is in the *Acacia* genus, whose members are commonly called wattles throughout Australia.

Description: This small to medium sized tree can grow up to 14 metres, though most specimens in the Goldfields are well below this height and are mainly tall, spreading shrubs. It usually has a single trunk with hard, thick bark. The numerous branches support linear, leaf-like phyllodes (flattened stalks which function as leaves). These shiny green phyllodes are 60 to 250 millimetres long by five to 10 millimetres wide and have a distinct hook at the tip. Yellow flowers are produced in masses and structured into rod-like formations about 25 millimetres long. The seeds are arranged in a straight line within papery, light brown pods.

OTHER NAMES: Raspberry jam, jam wattle, jam tree, mangard.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The hooked tip and silvery edge of the long, thin phyllodes distinguish jam from similar acacias.

HABITAT: Preferred soils include sandy loams and lateritic gravels associated with rocky outcrops. Small populations often cluster together in moisture-gaining sites in the Goldfields.

DISTRIBUTION: Jam is confined to WA. It grows from Kalbarri in the west, south-east to Nuytsland Nature Reserve on the South Coast. It is absent from the extreme south-west of the State.

FLOWERING TIME: July to September.

USES: Jam has long been used by farmers and pastoralists to make fence posts, strainers and rails, which are still made by timber cutters today. The dark sawn timber is also being trialed in the manufacture of various stringed instruments.

Photos - Grant Pronk

MULGA

(Acacia aneura)

Family Mimosaceae, the wattles

Mulga is an Aboriginal name for the wooden shields often made from this species. One of Australia's most resilient trees, mulga is typical of the arid areas of Australia. This slow-growing, and extremely drought-resistant tree, grows in many forms, ranging from a mallee-like shrub to a single trunked tree.

DESCRIPTION: The tree form of mulga can grow up to 10 metres high. It usually has a single trunk, which supports numerous small erect branches. The greyish-brown bark is fissured and rough. Like most wattles, the true leaves are shed in the early stages of plant development and the leaf stalks (phyllodes) assume the role of leaves. Mulga phyllodes vary greatly in shape, ranging from long, very linear and rounded to wide and elliptical. Their colour varies from green to grey, but they are usually pale green in the Goldfields. Clusters of small yellow flowers are arranged in tight, cylindrical columns. Flat, paper-like pods hold the seeds.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Mulga is characterised by light green foliage and hard, fissured bark.

HABITAT: Large mulga woodlands are common in sandy loams and deep sandy soils, in a variety of landforms.

DISTRIBUTION: Mulga grows in a wide belt between Karratha and Carnarvon, which passes east through Meekatharra and just north of Kalgoorlie, then continues east over the borders. Mulga grows in all States except Tasmania and Victoria.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering is dependant upon rainfall.

USES: Thousands of tonnes were cut to fuel power plants and for domestic firewood during the early development of the north-eastern Goldfields. The dense timber is still cut today for farm and pastoral lease fencing. The dark, attractive timber with contrasting yellow sapwood is also used to make small ornaments.

Photo - Marie Lochman

Photo - Grant Pronk

WESTERN MYALL

(Acacia papyrocarpa)

Family Mimosaceae

Western myall is one of the more handsome wattles that grow in the Goldfields. Long branches support a dense crown with a slightly wispy appearance. The trunk can be fissured but is generally slightly gnarled. The hard, dense timber has similar qualities to African blackwood and West Indian ebony. It is chocolate to golden brown, with a gold fleck and an impressive ripple grain which can give a three-dimensional appearance.

DESCRIPTION: Western myall has a spreading appearance and can grow up to seven metres high. It has rough, dark grey to brown bark. The long flat phyllodes (false leaves), four to 12 centimetres long and one or two millimetres wide, are a silvery green colour and usually straight. The flowers, like those of most acacias, are tightly clustered into small yellow balls. Seeds are held in long, flat, paper-like pods, 11 centimetres long and up to a centimetre wide.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The spreading branches, combined with the mass of fine silvery green foliage, differentiates this tall acacia from the others found in the Goldfields.

HABITAT: Western myall grows mostly on strongly alkaline soils. In the Goldfields it is found in deeper sandy loams and clays. On the Nullarbor it is found growing on calcareous soils.

DISTRIBUTION: This species is found throughout the central and southern Goldfields, extending through the Nullarbor and into semi-arid areas of South Australia.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering appears to depend on heavy rains. Several dry seasons may pass without any flowers.

USES: In the past, western myall may have been used occasionally for firewood or fencing. Today the timber produced from this tree has excited many craftspeople throughout the world.

Photo - Grant Pronk

GIDGEE

(Acacia pruinocarpa)

Family Mimosaceae, the wattles

Gidgee's deeply fissured bark provides excellent refuge for small reptiles and insects. In its natural environment, gidgee is often a tall, dominant tree with a large, spreading crown. The tallest and broadest specimens are found in moisture gaining sites.

DESCRIPTION: This tall tree has a large, spreading, untidy crown with some individuals growing up to 12 metres tall. The rough bark often has large fissures that fold into the wood of the wide trunk and limbs. The false leaves (phyllodes) are long and thin, usually 70 to 170 millimetres by six to 22 millimetres. Gidgee's flowers are typical of all acacias, being densely arranged in golden coloured heads. Its seeds are held in long, flat pods.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: This large, untidy tree has a spreading canopy and very rough bark. Deep faults in the bark extend into the wood.

HABITAT: Gidgee is often associated with mulga in loamy soils, although some populations are found on granite ridges and neighbouring stony creek beds and also spinifex sandplains.

DISTRIBUTION: The tree has a broad distribution through the central and northern desert areas of WA. Its range begins about 50 kilometres east of Carnarvon and runs in a 700 kilometre wide belt to the east. Gidgee is a common tree of the north-eastern Goldfields.

FLOWERING TIME: October to December.

NOTE: The common name gidgee is also used to describe a similar acacia (*Acacia cambagei*) in the eastern states.

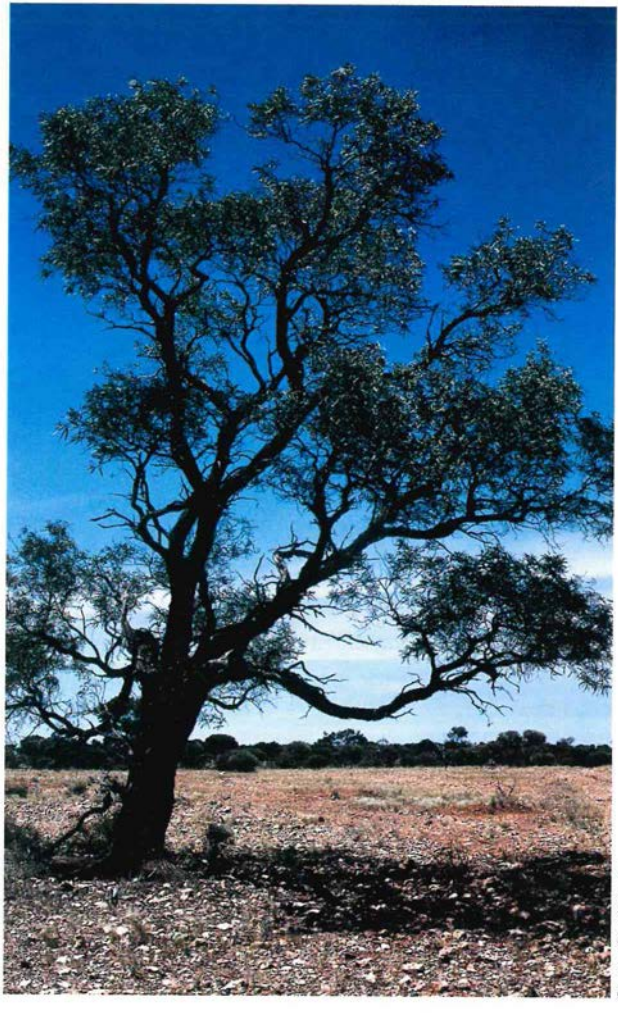


Photo - Grant Pronk

BERRIGAN

(Eremophila longifolia)

Family Myoporaceae

Berrigan is a member of the poverty bushes, which make up an entirely Australian genus. The Greek name *Eremophila*, which means "desert loving", is an apt description for this particular genus. The small berry-like fruits are a favourite food of emus and smaller birds, so seeds can be distributed far from the parent plant to other possible germination sites.

DESCRIPTION: Berrigan is usually multi-stemmed and grows as a medium-sized shrub to small tree up to eight metres high. Bark is dark brown and rough. The dull green leaves are arranged alternatively and have a drooping appearance. A single vein runs through the centre of the leaf and terminates at the tapering ends. As the botanical name suggests, these leaves are long and thin, up to 120 millimetres long and just three to six millimetres wide. Young leaves are covered with small hairs. Pale red flowers, about 25 millimetres long, are trumpet-like and have a protruding style. Small green oval fruits turn purplish-black when ripe and contain a hard woody seed. The style is often still attached after ripening.

OTHER NAMES: Long-leaved emu bush, tulypurpa.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Berrigan is best distinguished from other species of poverty bush by its long thin leaves, which droop from the branchlets.

HABITAT: This species mostly inhabits a range of loamy soils associated with water-gaining sites, including creek lines and sheltered gullies.

DISTRIBUTION: In WA, berrigan can be found in most parts of the State but is absent from the Kimberley and central Wheatbelt to the south-western corner.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering can occur in any month of the year and probably depends on adequate rainfall.

Photo - Babs & Bert Wells/CALM

USES: Berrigan has been used for grazing fodder in some arid areas. The timber, though rarely utilised, has an attractive grain and is said to be a good carving timber.

PIXIE BUSH

(Eremophila oldfieldii)

Family Myoporaceae

An attractive tree, pixie bush produces long red flowers which contrast well with its dark green leaves. It is one of about 180 species of poverty bush found in mainland Australia.

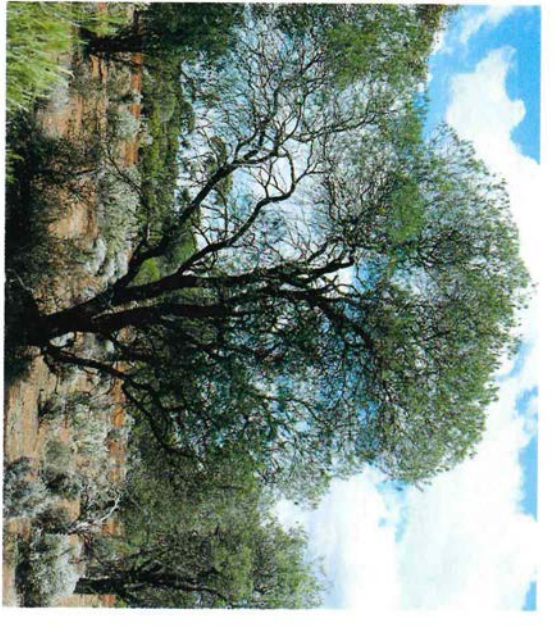
DESCRIPTION: This small tree can grow up to four metres high. Many small branches begin low on the trunk, giving the tree a rounded appearance. The rough bark is a dark greyish-brown. Long thin leaves, 100 millimetres by four millimetres, are flat and dark green. The leaves stand upright and have a prominent pointed tip. Bright red trumpet-shaped flowers, with protruding stamens and style, are scattered over the entire tree. The hard, small fruit is about four millimetres in diameter.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: This small, rounded tree is identified by its long, dark green pointed foliage and numerous red flowers in season.

HABITAT: In the Goldfields, pixie bush grows in a variety of landforms. Large populations often inhabit rocky granite hills and slopes, with shallow soils.

DISTRIBUTION: Pixie bush grows throughout the Goldfields and northern Wheatbelt and extends to the coast between Cervantes and Carnarvon.

FLOWERING TIME: August to November.



Photos - Grant Pronk

SNAP AND RATTLE

(Eucalyptus celastroides)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Snap and rattle often has dead branches and limbs in the crown – the result of borer and termite infestation. The common name is said to have been given to the tree by early timber workers in the Goldfields. So the story goes, once a limb was "snapped" from the tree the presence of termite galleries could be heard as a "rattle" when shaken.

DESCRIPTION: This small mallee can grow up to nine metres high but is more often around four metres. Rough, grey, flaky bark covers the lower section of the main stem. This leads up to flaky grey ribbons then smooth grey over coppery bark higher up the trunk. The slightly glossy, greyish-green leaves are narrow, 10 to 15 millimetres wide and 60 to 120 millimetres long. The crown generally has a dull grey appearance. The buds, in clusters of seven, are on long stalks and dark oil spots are common. Flowers are small and pale white. The small woody fruits are a barrel shape, tapering to the opening, with three or four compartments. The fruits are four to 10 millimetres long by four to six millimetres wide.

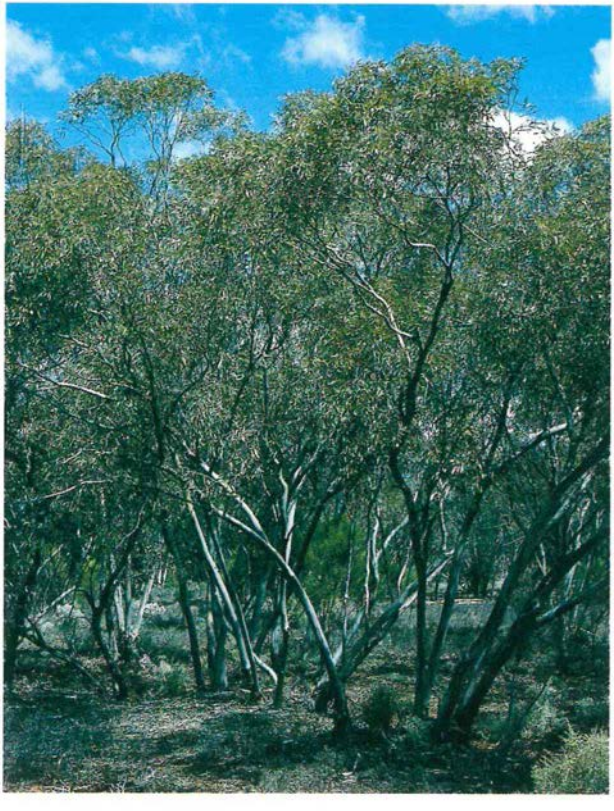
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Snap and rattle is a small mallee that often has dead timber in the crown. It mostly grows in small clumps or pockets. Individual trees are uncommon.

HABITAT: This mallee is usually found in flat to slightly undulating country in loamy or clayey soils.

DISTRIBUTION: Snap and rattle grows from the north-eastern Wheatbelt, to about 200 kilometres east of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

FLOWERING TIME: August to November.

USES: In pioneering days, snap and rattle was used for timber in underground mines and to fuel steam boilers and the local power station in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Today flowering trees are sought by bee-keepers for honey production.



Photos - Grant Pronk

MARBLE GUM

(Eucalyptus gongylocarpa)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

The marbled bark and greyish-green leaves of marble gum, contrasting with the rich red soil and yellow sandy dunes, often leave a lasting impression on visitors to WA's Great Victoria Desert. In fact, marble gum is often referred to as the signature tree of the desert. This attractive medium-sized tree is common in desert areas north and north-east of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

DESCRIPTION: Marble gum is mostly a single-stemmed tree, often reaching up to 20 metres high. Patches of loose brown bark flake off to reveal smooth, white bark. The spreading crown consists of greyish-green leaves 40 to 80 millimetres long, but the juvenile leaves are smaller and rounded. A whitish powder covers the branchlets. Small buds open into white or cream flowers. Three to seven globular woody fruits, six to 10 millimetres long by six to 11 millimetres wide, are held on a 15 to 20 millimetre stem.

OTHER NAMES: Baarla, bara gum, desert gum.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Marble gum is the largest eucalypt found in WA's deserts. Small patches of brown flaky bark over smooth white bark give the trunk a marbled appearance, hence the common name.

HABITAT: It grows mostly in deep, sandy soils of sand dunes and sandplains, and occasionally alongside salt lakes.

DISTRIBUTION: Marble gum is found from the Ashburton area south to near Leinster, through the Great Victoria Desert to the southern Northern Territory and northern South Australia.

FLOWERING TIME: January to February.

USES: This tree stood out from the low-lying desert vegetation, so early surveyors and explorers often marked camp-sites and places of interest by blazing relevant information on nearby marble gums.

Photos - Grant Pronk

GRIFFITH'S GREY GUM

(Eucalyptus griffithsii)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Griffith's grey gum often has a crooked appearance. This multi-stemmed mallee or small tree is common in a variety of soil and landform types throughout the central Goldfields. It is resistant to drought and frost and has a moderate tolerance to salt. The tree is named after John Moore Griffiths of Melbourne, who collected the sample from which the species was first described.

DESCRIPTION: This eucalypt may grow up to 15 metres high. Rough, grey bark is found around the first half metre of the trunk. The new smooth bark is brownish-red, but greys with age. Adult leaves, 70 to 120 millimetres long and 10 to 22 millimetres wide, are thick and glossy with numerous oil glands. Buds are always in groups of three. When the hemispherical caps fall off, they produce white flowers. The mature fruits are usually 12 millimetres long and 14 millimetres in diameter, with two outer ribs, and look like small bells.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The bell-like fruit, with its two outer ribs, and the smooth, reddish bark above the rough, flaky bark at the base of the trunk characterise this tree.

HABITAT: This tree grows mostly in red loamy soil and on saline flats, and sometimes on rocky slopes and gravelly soils.

DISTRIBUTION: Griffith's grey gum is confined to the central Goldfields, ranging from Lake Ballard in the north to Norseman in the south, Jaurdi in the west and east to Kurnalpi.

FLOWERING TIME: August to December and occasionally through to February.

USES: Griffith's grey gum was used in the past for mining timber and wood fuel. The tree produces an excellent craft timber and burls are popular for wood turning. Its tolerance to drought, frost and salt makes it a useful street tree and wind barrier.

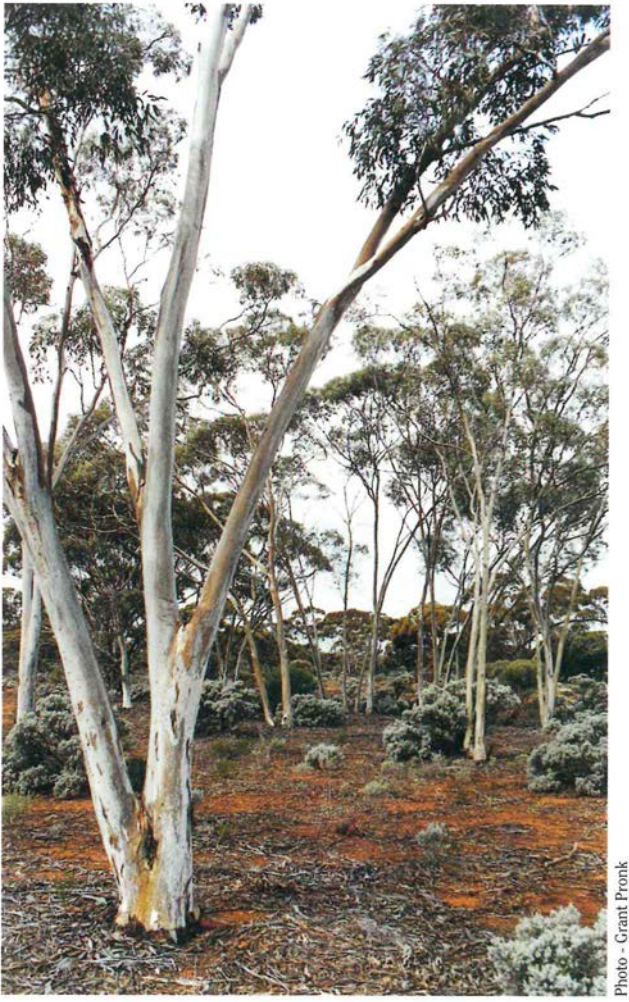


Photo - Grant Pronk

RED RIVER GUM

(Eucalyptus camaldulensis)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Despite being Australia's most widespread eucalypt, red river gum is restricted to seasonal watercourses throughout most of inland Australia, including the north-eastern Goldfields. This magnificent tree was first described and named after a garden specimen belonging to the Camalduli religious order in Naples, Italy. Its wide-ranging environmental tolerance has made it one of the most planted eucalypts in the world. The delightful contrast between the dry red outback and a creek lined with red river gums is, however, a sight restricted to inland Australia.

DESCRIPTION: This large-trunked, medium to large eucalypt can grow up to 25 metres high. Smooth white, often powdery, bark, with occasional small reddish patches, covers the entire tree. The bluish-green leaves, 90 to 180 millimetres long and 10 to 22 millimetres wide, usually have a slight gloss. Stalked buds with rounded caps are in clusters of seven to 11. The flowers are white. The hemispherical fruits, seven to eight millimetres wide and five to six millimetres long, have a sloping rim. There are usually four valves.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The tree is usually restricted to inland creeks. Its tall, white-barked trunk supports a mass of bluish-green foliage.

HABITAT: Red river gum is found along or near intermittent creeks throughout inland Australia in a range of soil types.

DISTRIBUTION: In WA, this eucalypt grows from near Geraldton and extends across the State in a north-easterly direction.

FLOWERING TIME: In WA it flowers in September and October.

USES: The timber has been used extensively in the eastern states for panelling, flooring, and sleepers. It is a popular garden tree and is a shade and street tree in towns of inland Australia.

Photo - Grant Pronk

MERRIT

(Eucalyptus flocktoniae)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

This small tree is completely covered with smooth white bark. Merrit was heavily cut between Higginsville and Widgiemooltha during the 1920s and 1930s for mining timber and fuel, where today it has thickly regenerated in extensive stands. It was named after botanical artist Margaret Flockton.

DESCRIPTION: This small to medium eucalypt can grow up to 12 metres tall. It occasionally grows in mallee form. Its whitish-grey bark is shed in summer to expose new brown bark. Adult leaves, between 50 to 140 millimetres long and seven to 22 millimetres wide, are dark green and glossy, with obvious oil glands, and are arranged alternately. Buds, held in clusters of seven to 11, have largely rounded caps with long, horn-like extensions. The flowers are white. The pendulous, urn-shaped fruits are 10 millimetres long and between four and six millimetres wide at the opening.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Merrit looks similar to many Goldfields eucalypt species, but has a characteristic dark green crown. The smooth white bark and glossy dark green leaves are a clue to its identity, and the urn-shaped fruit will confirm this.

HABITAT: It grows mainly in flat areas with sandy loam soils.

DISTRIBUTION: Merrit is widespread through southern WA, including most of the Wheatbelt and Goldfields south of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering can vary with seasonal conditions but is usually between September and January.

USES: The thick regrowth woodlands in the Higginsville area still provide timber used for underground mining. The high nectar volume within the flowers supplies a good honey flow. Its red timber has potential for sawn timber products and craft use.

Photo - Marie Lochman

GOLDFIELDS BLACKBUTT

(Eucalyptus lesouefii)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Goldfields blackbutt is widespread in the Goldfields, growing occasionally in mallee form. The dark rough bark covering the first one to three metres of the trunk has given rise to the name blackbutt. Its scientific name honours a former Director of the Zoological Gardens in Perth, Ernest Le Souef.

DESCRIPTION: This short to medium trunked eucalypt can grow up to 12 metres tall. Dark, rough bark surrounds the base of the trunk. Smooth white bark, which is often powdery, covers the rest of the tree. The dull green leaves are 100 to 120 millimetres long by 12 to 15 millimetres wide, and the branchlets are usually shiny red. The buds, in clusters of seven to nine, have a heavily ribbed cap with a slight beak. Flowers are cream to pale yellow. The cup-shaped fruits, eight to 10 millimetres long and about 10 millimetres wide, have deep ribs and a powdery coating.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Dark flaky bark covers the base of the trunk and the bud cap is shaped like a "soft serve" ice cream.

HABITAT: This species grows in red sandy loam and often in gravelly soils along small ridges.

DISTRIBUTION: Goldfields blackbutt extends from around Leonora in the north through Kalgoorlie-Boulder and south to the Norseman area in a swath about 150 kilometres wide.

FLOWERING TIME: November to February.

USES: Once used extensively for mining timber and fuel wood, today its density, beautiful grain and chocolate brown wood makes it a valuable furniture-grade timber. The wood is hard and durable, and has also been used for parquetry floors and panelling.

NOTE: Cleland's blackbutt (*Eucalyptus clelandii*) also grows in the Goldfields and has a similar appearance. However, the buds of Cleland's blackbutt are usually smaller, and not as deeply ribbed.

Photo - Marie Lochman

RED MORREL

(Eucalyptus longicornis)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Red morrel is one of the taller trees of the Goldfields. It tolerates salt, drought and frost, making it a popular street tree. The common name is derived from the Aboriginal word for this species.

DESCRIPTION: This medium to tall tree can reach up to 30 metres high. Strips of grey, rough bark (similar to that of jarrah) cover the trunk, with smooth grey bark on the branches. The long trunk usually makes up a large percentage of the tree's overall height. The glossy, dark green leaves have obvious oil glands. Adult leaves are 70 to 140 millimetres long and five to 13 millimetres wide. Buds are long, about nine to 13 millimetres, and narrow, about four to five millimetres wide. Flowers are white. The barrel-shaped fruits are three to nine millimetres long by five to seven millimetres wide. The valve points are very long and extend out of the fruit.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Red morrel is tall, with rough grey bark over most of the tree. The long, horn-like buds (*longicornis* means "long-horn") are distinctive.

HABITAT: It grows mostly in loamy soils on flat terrain.

DISTRIBUTION: This species is common in the south-eastern Goldfields and throughout the Wheatbelt as far north as Coorow.

FLOWERING TIME: December to February.

USES: The durable wood has been used by wheelwrights, for agricultural purposes, for mining timber and fuel wood. The red sawn timber with an interlocking grain has huge potential for making furniture. Red morrel also produces a good honey flow.

NOTE: Red morrel looks similar to the less common black morrel (*Eucalyptus melanoxylon*), which has shorter rounded buds and darker bark.

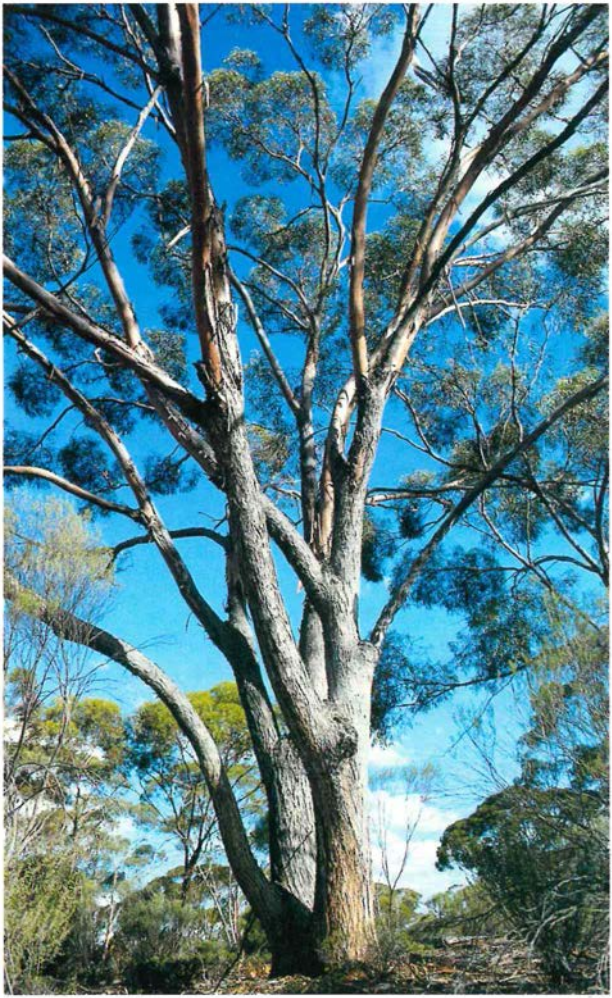


Photo - Grant Pronk

SALMON GUM

(Eucalyptus salmonophloia)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

This tall tree, with its dark green foliage and salmon-coloured trunk, is probably the best-known eucalypt of the Goldfields and Wheatbelt. It is most attractive in late summer, when the new salmon-coloured bark appears. Salmon gum is the tallest native tree species in the Goldfields. This tree has been planted throughout the world. Its resistance to drought and frost coupled with a degree of salt tolerance make it a useful tree.

DESCRIPTION: This medium to tall tree can grow up to 25 metres high. Its branches usually grow out and upwards. Smooth, new, reddish-pink bark is exposed in late summer, then slowly fades to grey through the year. Thin, glossy, dark green leaves reach 50 to 120 millimetres long and seven to 15 millimetres wide and have visible oil glands and veins. The small, round, yellowish-green buds look like tiny lemons, and up to 11 buds can be found on one stalk. Flowers are small and cream. Fruits, just three to five millimetres long, have three compartments.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Seasonal salmon-coloured bark contrasts with the deep green glossy leaves. Salmon gum is larger than most other Goldfields eucalypts, but has the smallest fruits.

HABITAT: This species usually forms an open woodland on flat to slightly undulating ground with red sandy loams.

DISTRIBUTION: Salmon gum grows from York in the west to Pinjin Station and the edge of the Nullarbor in the east.

FLOWERING TIME: September to December.

USES: Salmon gum was used for agricultural purposes, in underground mines and for firewood. The dense, fine-grained, red durable timber is now used for flooring and panelling. A more recent experimental use has been in musical instrument manufacture, particularly flute head joints.

Photo - Jiri Lochman

GIMLET

(Eucalyptus salubris)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Many a traveller passing through the Goldfields has stopped to marvel at this attractive tree with its fluted, copper-coloured trunk. Gimlet, so-called because of the corkscrew-like appearance of its stems, can resist frosts and drought and tolerate salt, and has been planted throughout the world.

DESCRIPTION: This small to medium-sized eucalypt can grow up to 20 metres. The smooth, shiny, coppery bark fades to greyish-brown. The leaves are green and very glossy with oil glands. Adult leaves are narrow, five to 10 millimetres across and 50 to 120 millimetres long. The stalked buds resemble a long egg in an egg cup. They are reddish and usually clustered in groups of seven. The buds, seven to 12 millimetres long and three to six millimetres wide, open into white flowers. Hemispherical fruits on thick stalks usually have three, sometimes four, compartments.

OTHER NAMES: Gimlet gum, fluted gum tree.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The shiny, copper-coloured bark and fluted stems make gimlet easy to identify.

HABITAT: Gimlet grows in rich loamy soils and is often found in small clumps in land depressions. Occasionally individual trees may be seen on slightly undulating country in gravelly soils.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree is widespread through the central and southern Goldfields and into the northern Wheatbelt as far as Mullewa. In the wild, gimlet grows only in WA.

FLOWERING TIME: December to March.

USES: Gimlet woodlands have been extensively cleared in the Wheatbelt. The hard, durable timber was used for fencing and building. The timber was also used in the mining industry as underground supports and for fuel wood. It is now used for sawn timber.

Photos - Jiri Lochman

RIBBON BARK GUM

(Eucalyptus sheathiana)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

This slender, spreading tree has long, ribbon-like strips of deciduous bark falling away from the trunk in late summer and autumn. A woodland of ribbon bark gum is an impressive sight, particularly with a breeze lifting and swaying the bark. The tree was named after a former superintendent of Kings Park in Perth.

DESCRIPTION: Ribbon bark gum is either a small tree up to eight metres high, or a mallee up to four metres. The fresh, copper-coloured bark eventually fades and strips away. Despite its smooth appearance, the bark can be prickly to touch. The dull, bluish-green leaves, about 100 millimetres by 20 millimetres, contain numerous oil glands. Oval-shaped buds, seven to 12 millimetres by five to six millimetres, are often covered with a fine, white powder and have a slightly ribbed cap. Flowers are white to creamy yellow. Cup-shaped fruits are eight millimetres long by seven millimetres wide, and usually have four compartments.

OTHER NAMES: Sheath's gum, Sheath's marlock, ribbon bark mallee.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The long, ribbon-like strips of falling bark in autumn.

HABITAT: Ribbon bark gum usually grows on flat terrain in sandy soils.

DISTRIBUTION: This eucalypt grows throughout the southern Goldfields, as far east as Balladonia and parts of the central and northern Wheatbelt, and as far north as Wongan Hills.

FLOWERING TIME: Between April and June but sometimes as early as January.

USES: Ribbon bark gum was used for fuel and mining timber during the development of the Goldfields. Heavy flowering provides a good honey flow.

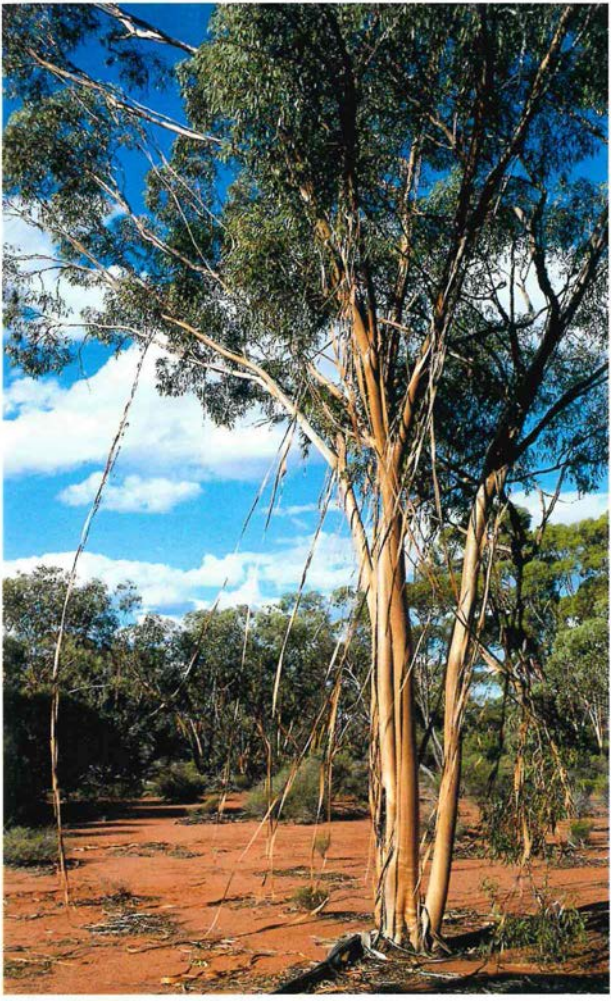


Photo - Grant Pronk

CORAL GUM

(Eucalyptus torquata)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Coral gum's distinctive coral-coloured flowers, along with its resistance to frost and drought, has made this tree one of the most widely planted street and garden trees in Australia. The Latin name *torquata* means "adorned with a collar" and describes the collar-like base of the buds and fruits.

DESCRIPTION: Coral gum is a small to medium-sized eucalypt with a dense spreading crown. It can grow up to ten metres tall. Rough, hard, dark grey bark covers the first few metres of the trunk, with smoother dark bark on the upper branches. The dull, bluish-green leaves are 60 to 150 millimetres long and 10 to 25 millimetres wide. The buds have a raised, ribbed base and cylindrical body, while the cap is also ribbed and has a prominent beak. The flowers are mostly pink, but yellow, red and cream flowers can often be observed. The cylindrical fruit, 12 to 18 millimetres long and seven to 13 millimetres wide, has a ribbed base and contains four compartments.

OTHER NAMES: Coolgardie gum, Coolgardie rose, coral-flowered gum, Goldfields red-flowering gum, pink-flowered gum.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The hard, dark grey bark and small but full structure of the coral gum are its most distinctive features. The buds and colourful flowers are very distinctive in season.

HABITAT: Coral gum prefers stony hills with red loamy soils.

DISTRIBUTION: Coral gum is most common in hilly areas around Coolgardie, extending south to Norseman. There are isolated stands east of Kalgoorlie and near Kambalda.

FLOWERING TIME: August to November.

USES: Coral gum was used for firewood in the past. Today it is widely planted as an ornamental and street tree. The good nectar flow makes it popular with bee-keepers.

Photos - Grant Pronk

REDWOOD

(Eucalyptus transcontinentalis)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

The species was named *transcontinentalis* because it was once thought to be distributed across the continent, from WA to Victoria. It was later found that the species only grows in WA. The wrongly descriptive botanical name is still valid.

DESCRIPTION: This medium to large tree or mallee has smooth white bark, with flaky ribbon-like strips of reddish bark when shed. Trees can grow up to 25 metres and mostly have a single trunk. The dull, greyish-green leaves, 60 to 150 millimetres long and eight to 21 millimetres wide, have numerous oil glands. Cup-shaped to cylindrical buds are often covered with white powder. Flowers range from yellow to cream. Urn-shaped fruits, seven to 10 millimetres long and six to 11 millimetres wide, usually have a powdery coating, and are divided into four compartments.

OTHER NAMES: Boongul.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Redwood is the largest eucalypt with smooth white bark in the Goldfields. Its dull bluish-green leaves distinguish it from salmon gum, which has glossy green leaves. The bud caps have a long, horn-like structure.

HABITAT: Redwood grows mostly on flat country with red sandy loams, usually in small stands. Solitary individuals are rare. It often grows as a mallee in sandy soils

DISTRIBUTION: This tree extends from just east of the Darling Scarp to Balladonia in the east and north to Mullewa.

FLOWERING TIME: August to November.

USES: Aboriginal people, who called the tree boongul, made spears from the hard, durable wood. It was used for mining timber and fuel in the developing Goldfields. Today, the attractive red timber is used for flooring, panelling and high grade furniture. Redwood may prove useful for making musical instruments.

Photo - Grant Pronk

LEMON-FLOWERED GUM

(Eucalyptus woodwardii)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

As its name suggests, the lemon-flowered gum produces large clusters of delightful lemon-coloured flowers. It is a common street tree in the Goldfields and Wheatbelt.

DESCRIPTION: This small to medium tree or mallee reaches up to 15 metres, and usually has a long, slender trunk and drooping branches. A white powder covers most of the smooth bark, branches, buds and fruit. Dull, greenish-grey leaves are about 100 to 180 millimetres long and 20 to 50 millimetres wide. Hemispherical buds, 16 to 18 millimetres long by nine to 12 millimetres wide, have a beaked cap and are usually in groups of seven to a stalk. Large lemon-coloured flowers are arranged in clusters. Bell-like fruits, up to 15 millimetres long and 14 millimetres wide, have four or five compartments.

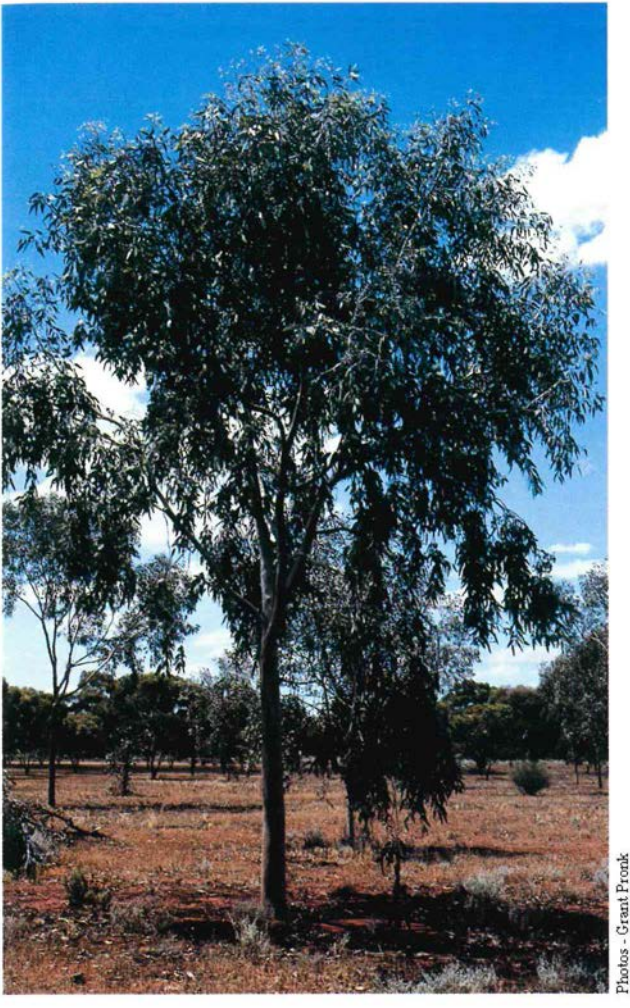
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The large yellow flowers.

HABITAT: It grows in flat country on deep sandy loams.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree is found only in a small area east of Kalgoorlie-Boulder around Karonie and Coonana.

FLOWERING TIME: August to November.

NOTE: Lemon-flowered gum and coral gum will hybridise when planted together. The hybrid "torwood" is a widely planted ornamental.



Photos - Grant Pronk

YARLDARLBA

(Eucalyptus youngiana)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Though yarldarlba is a small tree or spreading mallee, it produces the largest fruits and flowers of any eucalypt. The species was first collected by Mr J Young on Giles' fourth expedition. Resistance to drought and frost, and its spectacular flowers and fruit has made it a popular ornamental and windbreak species.

DESCRIPTION: This small tree or mallee has a scraggly appearance and grows up to 12 metres high. It has smooth, grey bark above rough, dark grey bark on the base. Faint veins are visible on the thick, dull, greyish-green leaves, usually 100 to 150 millimetres long and 20 to 35 millimetres wide. Globular, strongly ribbed buds are clustered into groups of up to three, and the bud cap has a small peak. The buds are very large. Their width, between 35 and 70 millimetres, is greater than their length, which is between 25 and 40 millimetres. The red and yellow flowers are large, up to 100 millimetres in diameter, and spectacular. The large woody fruit is ribbed at the base and platforms toward the collared valves.

OTHER NAMES: Large-fruited mallee, Ooldea mallee.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: This small, straggly tree is most easily recognised by its large fruit and colourful flowers in season.

HABITAT: Yarldarlba is widespread over flat arid country with sandy loams, and associates with spinifex, marble gum or mulga.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree is found in the arid areas of the north-eastern Goldfields extending through the Great Victoria Desert into South Australia. It extends south to the Frazer Range Station, east of Norseman.

FLOWERING TIME: June to October.

USES: Probably only used for firewood in the past, today yarldarlba is widely planted as an ornamental and windbreak tree.

Photo - Grant Pronk

Photo - Babs & Bert Wells

BOREE

(Melaleuca pauperiflora)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Boree has a robust appearance. Its stems are usually long and straight, and support a rounded clump of dark green foliage which makes up the crown. Boree is part of a large group commonly known as tea-trees. These small to medium trees mostly grow in alkaline soil, where they often dominate the understorey.

DESCRIPTION: This small to medium tree can reach up to four metres high and usually has one stem. Grey fibrous bark covers all of the stem and branches. The oblong leaves, scattered over the branchlets, are small, hairy and thick. They measure between two and six millimetres long. Flowers consist of creamy-coloured stamens arranged in circular formations. The small, urn-shaped fruits are generally two to three millimetres long.

OTHER NAMES: Goldfields tea-tree, kulumba.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Look for the rounded clump of dark green foliage, supported by a single grey stem.

HABITAT: Boree is mostly found on slightly undulating, water-gaining sites. The soils are usually clayey and alkaline. The tree forms small stands, and solitary individuals are rare.

DISTRIBUTION: Boree is widespread in the Goldfields and Wheatbelt. Good stands can be seen along the Great Eastern Highway, between the towns of Merredin and Southern Cross.

FLOWERING TIME: August to November.

USES: Early settlers in the Goldfields and Wheatbelt used boree for windbreaks. Its hard, durable timber was frequently used for fence posts, firewood and some underground mine supports. Today it is becoming popular with wood turners and craftspeople.

NOTE: The name "boree" has also been used to describe some species of acacia in the eastern states.

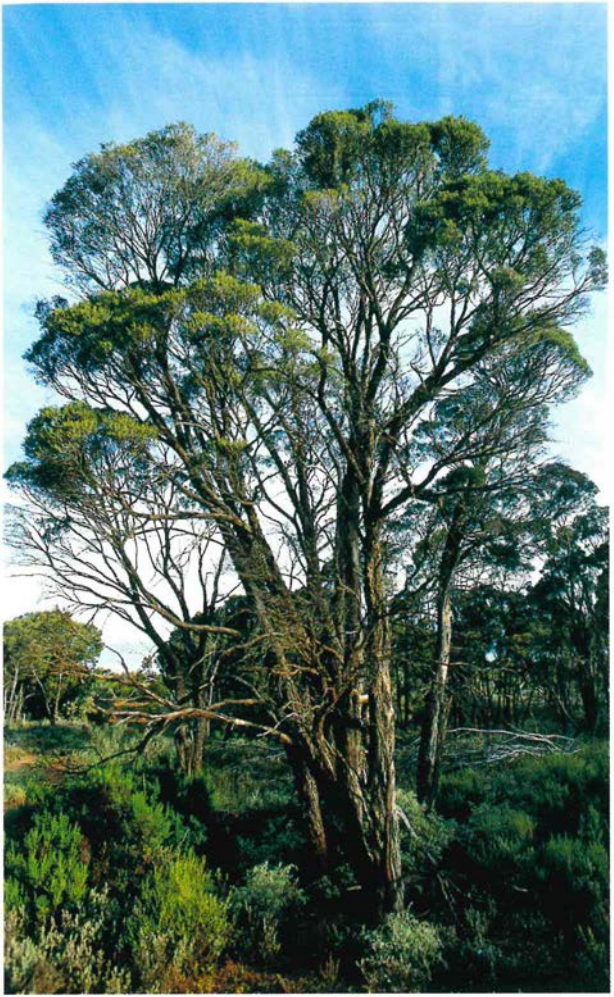


Photo - Jiri Lochman

NATIVE WILLOW

(Pittosporum phylliraeoides)

Family Pittosporaceae

This graceful, weeping tree resembles the European willow, though the environments they grow in are poles apart. The native willow produces small bright orange fruits with sticky red seeds, thought to be spread by birds.

DESCRIPTION: This tree grows up to eight metres high. It is usually multi-stemmed, but often single-stemmed, with a light mottled bark. Slender, glossy green leaves, up to 10 centimetres long, have slightly hooked tips and an obvious central vein. The small flowers have five yellowish petals and produce an orange fruit somewhat like a small apricot. When mature, the 20 millimetre diameter fruit splits into halves to reveal many small sticky red seeds.

OTHER NAMES: Native apricot, weeping pittosporum, cheesewood, snottygobble, butterbush, meemeei, buning buning, yaliti.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Its long, drooping branches give native willow a weeping appearance. In the absence of grazing, foliage often reaches the ground.

HABITAT: This tree grows mostly in small clumps in creek beds and other moisture-gaining areas. Native willow will grow in a broad range of soils, but prefers red sandy loams.

DISTRIBUTION: Native willow is widespread, growing through all of the semi-arid and arid regions of WA. A non-weeping variant occurs near Perth coasts.

FLOWERING TIME: July to October.

USES: The blonde timber of native willow has a characteristic snakeskin-patterned grain and has recently become sought after as a high quality craftwood. The species is grown as a garden plant in some parts of Australia.

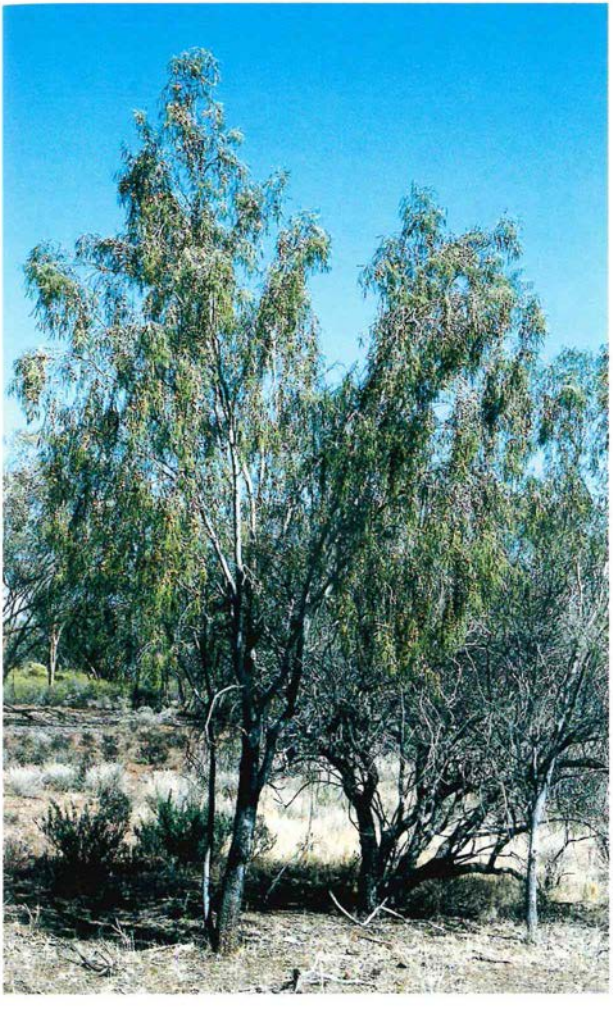


Photo - Grant Pronk

WATER BUSH

(Grevillea nematophylla)

Family Proteaceae

Throughout most of the year, water bush is an unexciting, ordinary bushy tree. However, during early summer, when this species is in flower, the masses of cream coloured flowers are a magnificent sight. The plant occasionally associates with natural water sources, hence the common name.

DESCRIPTION: Water bush is a tall shrub to small tree growing up to four metres. This spreading tree is often wider than it is high. Smooth, light-coloured bark surrounds the trunk and many of the branches. The silvery greyish-blue leaves, 60 to 150 millimetres long and two to four millimetres wide, are long and needle-like. Masses of cream to yellow flowers are clustered on spikes, at the ends of the upper branchlets. The hard, oval-shaped fruit is dark brown, 13 millimetres long, and has a small point at one end. The fruit splits into two halves when ripe.

OTHER NAMES: Silver-leaved water bush.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Water bush is very similar to other Goldfields grevilleas, but its silvery greyish-blue, needle-like leaves and smooth light-coloured bark are distinctive.

HABITAT: Water bush is mostly found in deep sandy soils and in water-gaining sites. Individuals are common in the drainage systems running parallel to roads and tracks.

DISTRIBUTION: The wide distribution of this species extends from the Wheatbelt, through the Goldfields and into South Australia, the Northern Territory and New South Wales.

FLOWERING TIME: October to January.

NOTE: Berry's grevillea *(grevillea berryana)*, also known by the common name Christmas tree, is very similar to the water bush. Berry's grevillea has rough, dark bark and its distribution extends north into the Pilbara.

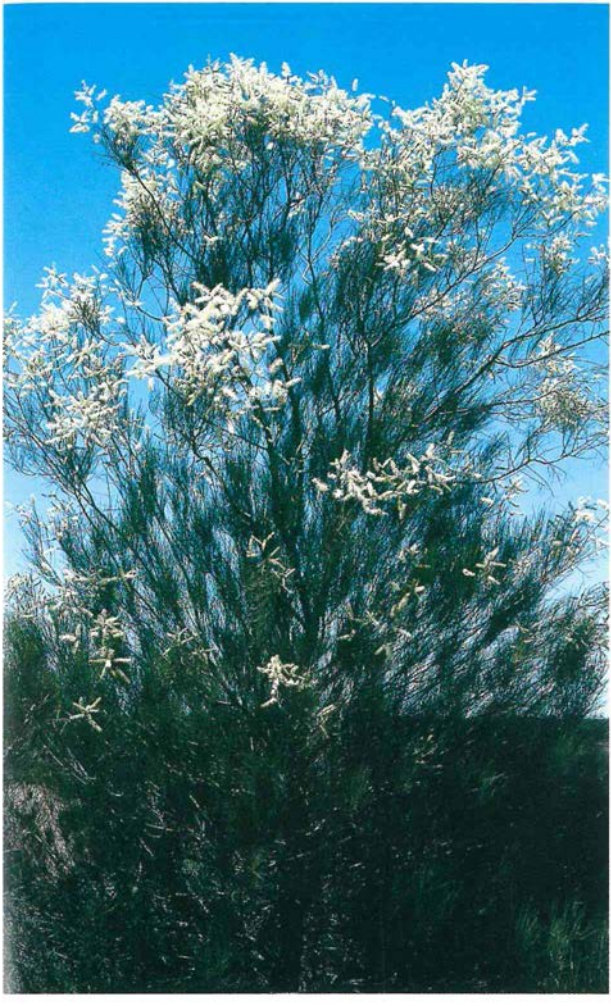


Photo - Grant Pronk

BEEFWOOD

(Grevillea striata)

Family Proteaceae

Beefwood is one of few grevilleas which grow as trees. This is quite surprising given the semi-arid to arid conditions of the northern Goldfields. The common name describes the blood red heartwood of this tree, which resembles a freshly cut steak. The sapwood is yellow. The botanical name *striata* is derived from Greek, and refers to the fine longitudinal lines on the leaves.

DESCRIPTION: This large, attractive tree usually has a single trunk and grows up to 14 metres high. The rough, dark grey bark is deeply fissured and extends through to the branches. New bark is a rufous red. Adult leaves are long and narrow, 150 to 450 millimetres by four to eight millimetres wide, and have about ten longitudinal lines. Cream flowers are arranged in long thin columns, 10 to 13 millimetres wide and 50 to 80 millimetres long. Woody fruits are oval, 15 millimetres long and 10 millimetres wide, and have a small rounded peak at the base.

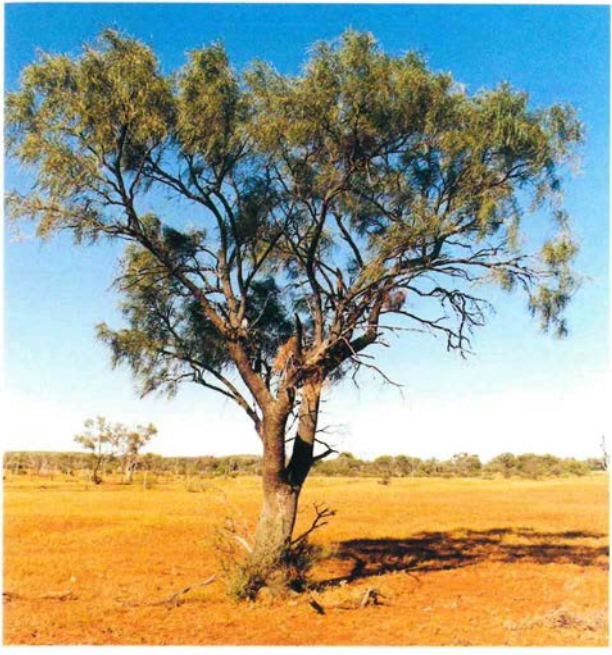
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Beefwood can be recognised by its large trunk, rough dark grey bark, and long, thin leaves. It is one of the taller non-eucalypt trees of the northern Goldfields.

HABITAT: This tree grows in red loamy soils associated with drainage channels and moisture-gaining sites. It often grows with corkwood and mulga.

DISTRIBUTION: Beefwood is widely distributed, from Meekatharra and Wiluna in the south, north to Karratha and into the Kimberley. In northern areas it is rarely taller than four metres.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering appears to depend on favourable seasonal conditions.

USES: Aboriginal people used the dark red resin as a hard setting glue to manufacture tools. Today, the beautifully-grained, rich red timber is sought after by timber craftsmen.



Photos - Grant Pronk

EMU TREE

(Hakea francisiana)

Family Proteaceae

This ordinary-looking tree does not normally attract much attention, but when the emu tree flowers it really stands out from the crowd. The masses of bright red or pink flowers create a visual spectacle.

DESCRIPTION: This small bushy tree can reach up to seven metres, but in the Goldfields its average height is only about three metres. Many low, spreading branches give the emu tree a stout to fully rounded appearance. The bark is dark brown and fissured. The common name is derived from the linear leaves, up to 200 millimetres long, which have a similar shape to emu feathers. The dull green foliage is held upright and fine hairs cover the almost waxy leaves. Flowers are mostly deep red but do vary to pink, and are arranged into spike-like inflorescences. The hard, woody fruits have a beak-like opening.

OTHER NAMES: Grass-leaved hakea.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Look for masses of red or pink flowers during the flowering period. At other times, the long narrow upright leaves will help you to identify the tree.

HABITAT: Emu tree grows well on deep, well-draining, sandy soils.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree covers a wide area in sandplain country of the Goldfields and Wheatbelt regions.

FLOWERING TIME: Emu tree is able to bloom twice in one season, between July and November.

USES: Past use of the emu tree appears to have been limited to some ornamental plantings. Recent experimentation by some wood workers has found the intricate, colourful grain of the timber to be enchanting.

Photo - Grant Pronk

NATIVE CURRANT

(Canthium latifolium)

Family Rubiaceae

This small tree is uniquely Australian. Its small fruits are similar to currants and the flowers and leaves resemble those of a lemon tree. Contrary to its name, native currant is not a useful fruit tree. It is, however, well adapted to the dry, rugged conditions of the arid inland.

DESCRIPTION: Native currant trees are usually multi-stemmed and can grow up to three metres tall. The almost smooth bark is light grey. The leaves are thick, rigid, broad and cupped. Numerous small veins run through the wide, dull green leaves, which are up to 100 millimetres long. The small, scented flowers have five cream-coloured petals. They produce small black berries.

OTHER NAMES: Wild lemon, native plum, awalyuru.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The rigid leaves resemble those of a lemon tree and are most distinctive.

HABITAT: Native currant grows mostly in loamy soils associated with mulga stands. Small populations are often found in sheltered areas of rocky breakaway country.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree grows over most of WA's deserts.

FLOWERING TIME: Summer and autumn.

USES: Native currant has recently become popular with wood turners. The soft, stable, light-coloured timber has a fine, intricate grain.

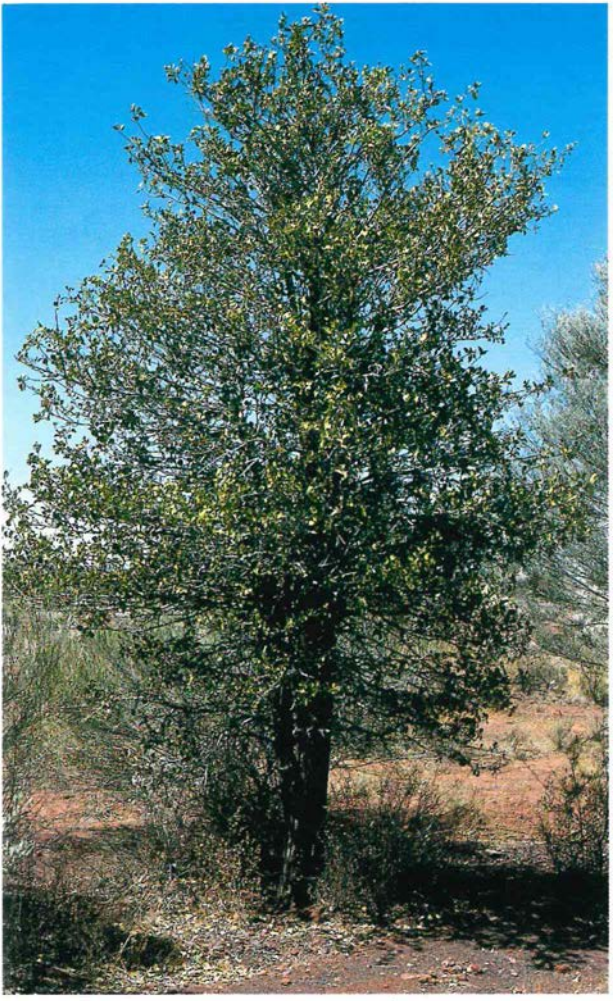


Photo - Grant Pronk

QUANDONG

(Santalum acuminatum)

Family Santalaceae, the sandalwoods

Quandong is a member of the parasitic sandalwood family. Nutrients are drawn from the roots of other plants, via sucker-like fastenings. The fruit and kernel of quandong has long been an important food source for Aboriginal people. More recently, the fruit has been used in jams and pies and included on the menus of some fashionable restaurants.

DESCRIPTION: Quandong is a small tree with a rounded canopy which can grow up to five metres high. The fissured bark is a light brownish-grey. Erect branches usually stem from a single short trunk. Thick, lime green leaves, about 70 millimetres long by 30 millimetres wide, are arranged in opposite pairs. Small cream to orange flowers are organised at the ends of the branchlets and are succeeded by large, bright red, rounded fruit up to 30 millimetres in diameter. Leather-like skin covers the wrinkled nut, which contains a white kernel.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Quandong looks similar to sandalwood, with "greener" leaves, but does not have a heavily scented timber. The woody nuts are heavily pitted in comparison with the smooth sandalwood nuts.

HABITAT: This tree is found in a large variety of vegetation communities and soil types. Emus are often responsible for spreading the seed.

DISTRIBUTION: Quandong grows throughout the southern half of WA, apart from the extreme south-western corner of the State.

FLOWERING TIME: Usually September to January. However, it will flower at any time depending on rainfall events.

USES: As well as being a popular bush tucker, the nut has been used to make jewellery. Aboriginal people used the oily timber for making fire using friction and for carving artefacts.

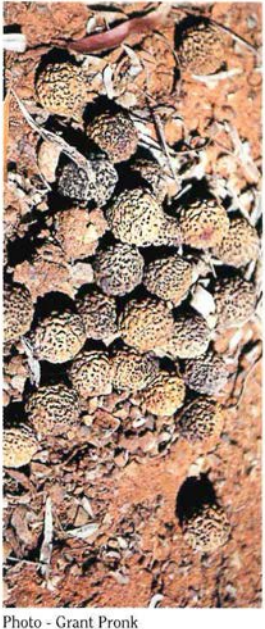


Photo - Grant Pronk

Photo - Andrew Brown

SANDALWOOD

(Santalum spicatum)

Family Santalaceae

This slow-growing tree and its delightful aromatic timber played an important part in the early years of the fledgling Western Australian colony. During the 1840s, sandalwood earned up to 45 per cent of the colony's export income. Today, the fragrant timber is still exported to parts of Asia, where it is made into joss sticks used in religious ceremonies.

DESCRIPTION: Sandalwood's irregular branches, and the frequent presence of dead wood in the crown, gives this tree an untidy appearance. Taller trees can reach up to eight metres, however, most specimens in the Goldfields are only about two or three metres high. The bark is dark brown and rough. The thick bluish-green leaves are about 65 millimetres long, tapering to both ends. Small reddish flowers with four petals have a pungent odour that attracts blowflies and other flies to pollinate the plant. The smooth, round fruits are about 20 millimetres in diameter. They have a reddish-brown, leather-like skin covering a hard, woody nut.

OTHER NAMES: Wilarak.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: The brown, marble-like nuts can be found on the ground below most trees. Quandong trees look similar, but their nuts are heavily pitted.

HABITAT: In the Goldfields, sandalwood prefers undulating sandplains and granite ridges. A wide selection of host species often promotes better stands.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree is widely distributed, from Shark Bay through the Wheatbelt and arid Goldfields to the South Coast.

FLOWERING TIME: Flowering is usually between February and April but can occur in any season depending on rainfall.

OTHER USES: Craft and other novelty items are made from the timber and the shavings are used for potpourri.

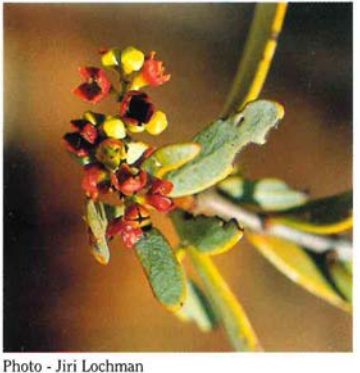


Photo - Jiri Lochman

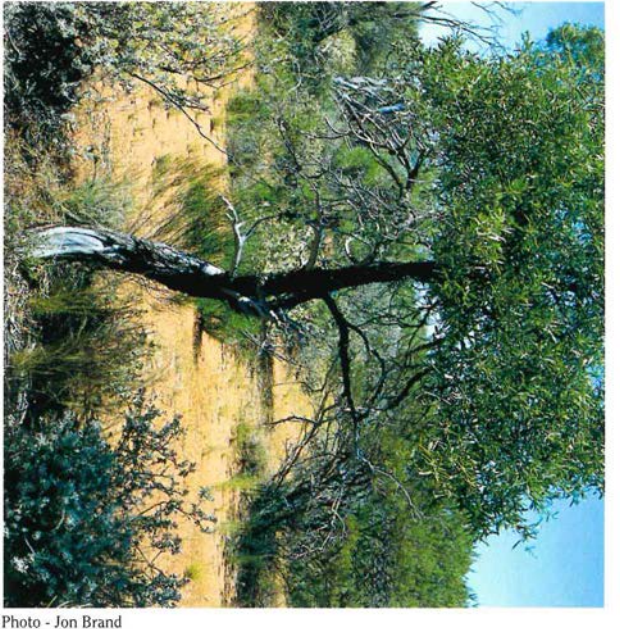


Photo - Jon Brand

DESERT KURRAJONG

(Brachychiton gregorii)

Family Sterculiaceae, the kurrajongs

The fresh appearance of desert kurrajong seems out of place in the harsh environment of arid WA. The tree's bright green leaves and rounded crown, and its ability to survive in dry conditions, has made it a popular street tree and ornamental.

DESCRIPTION: This medium-sized tree can reach up to six metres. Desert kurrajong is a shapely tree which usually has a single tapering trunk with light reddish-brown bark that is slightly rough. The rounded canopy is made up of bright green leaves with a light gloss. The adult leaves have three or five finger-like lobes and are 80 to 140 millimetres long. Small green-flecked, pale purple, bell-shaped flowers are arranged in clusters. The woody fruits are 50 millimetres long and hooked at one end. Each capsule contains numerous orange seeds, covered with fine prickly hairs.

OTHER NAMES: Common kurrajong, ngalta.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: Desert kurrajong has distinctive bright green, lobed leaves and a rounded canopy.

HABITAT: In the Goldfields, desert kurrajong grows on sandy loams and is often found on rocky hillsides.

DISTRIBUTION: This tree is widespread in semi-arid and arid parts of central WA. It is found from the Little Sandy Desert in the north to Widgemooltha in the south. Desert kurrajong also occurs in South Australia and the Northern Territory.

FLOWERING TIME: November to December.

USES: The roots of kurrajong were an important water source for desert Aboriginal people. This tree is both shady and very tolerant to drought, so it makes a useful street tree and ornamental.

NOTE: The desert kurrajong should not be mistaken for the eastern states kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*).

Photos - Grant Pronk

SIGHTING RECORD

SPECIES	REMARKS
black oak	
white cypress pine	
native poplar	
jam	
mulga	
western myall	
gidgee	
berrigan	
pixie bush	
snap and rattle	
marble gum	
Griffith's grey gum	
red river gum	
merrit	
Goldfields blackbutt	
red morrel	

Gimlet burl

SIGHTING RECORD

SPECIES	REMARKS
salmon gum	
gimlet	
ribbon bark gum	
coral gum	
redwood	
lemon-flowered gum	
yarldarlba	
boree	
native willow	
water bush	
beefwood	
emu tree	
native currant	
quandong	
sandalwood	
desert kurrajong	

Beefwood

Photos - Grant Pronk

INDEX

Goldfields blackbutt

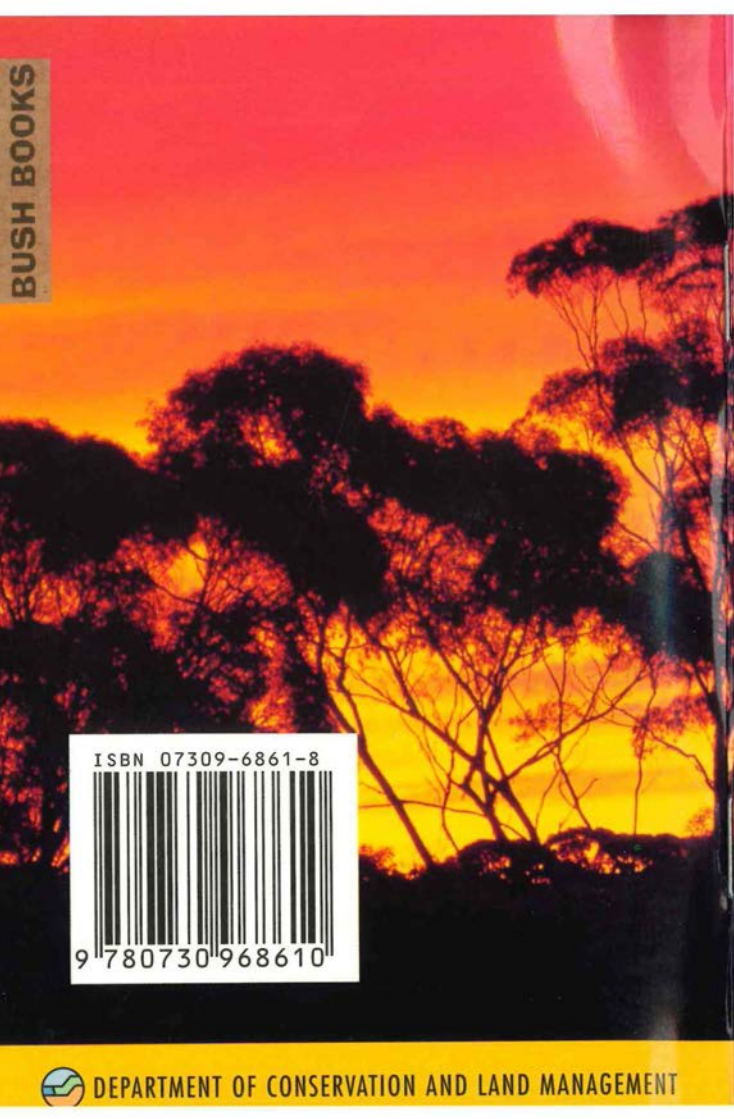
Photo - Marie Lochman

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Grant Pronk is a forester based in Kalgoorlie with the Department of Conservation and Land Management. He has a keen interest in the natural environment and trees of the Goldfields, and the development of the Goldfields speciality timber industry.

OTHER BOOKS IN THIS SERIES

Wildflowers of the South Coast
Common Wildflowers of the Mid-West
Common Wildflowers of the South-West Forests
Common Trees of the South-West Forests
Common Plants of the Kimberley
Common Birds in the Backyard
Common Birds of the South-West Forests
Whales and Dolphins of Western Australia
Mammals of the South-West
Mammals of North-Western Australia
Common Birds of the Kimberley
Hazardous Animals of North-Western Australia
Common Plants of the Pilbara
Animals of Shark Bay
Bush Tucker Plants of the South-West
Landforms of the Kimberley


BUSH BOOKS
ISBN 07309-6861-8
9 780730 968610
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT