

# LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

This PDF has been created for digital preservation. It may be used for research but is not suitable for other purposes. It may be superseded by a more current version or just be out-of-date and have no relevance to current situations.

## HOW TO PLANT A TREE

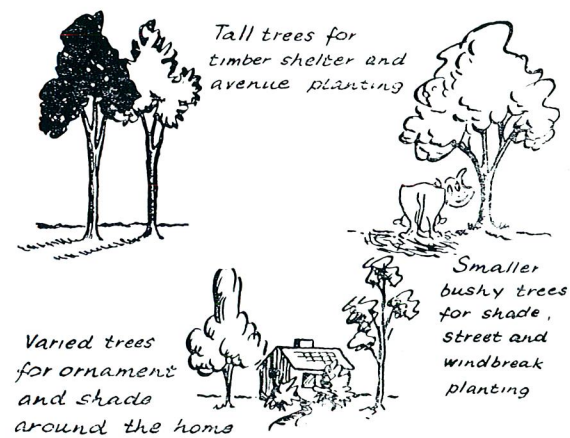
A person who plants a tree does so with the hope that it will thrive and serve some useful purpose. Perhaps he looks forward to a time when it will provide shade or shelter, perhaps fill a place in a park or garden or then again produce fruit or timber.

In order that a tree may fulfil its purpose it must be selected intelligently, planted correctly and tended and protected carefully.

This leaflet deals primarily with the establishment of ornamental, shade, shelter and timber trees which are the types normally produced in the Forests Department nurseries.

Leaflets similar to this one, which list and briefly describe suitable trees for both the coastal and inland areas of the State, are available from the Forests Department.

Fruit tree planting and orchard management is a specialist study and readers are advised to consult some appropriate authority for information on this subject.



## PLANTING STOCK

Nursery stock may be of several types, viz:

### 1.—Container Grown

(a) *Plants grown in individual containers* such as tubes, pots, tins, etc. This method of raising trees is employed with those species which are unable to tolerate severe damage to their roots, e.g. most Eucalypts and many other evergreen species. Plants raised in this manner can be

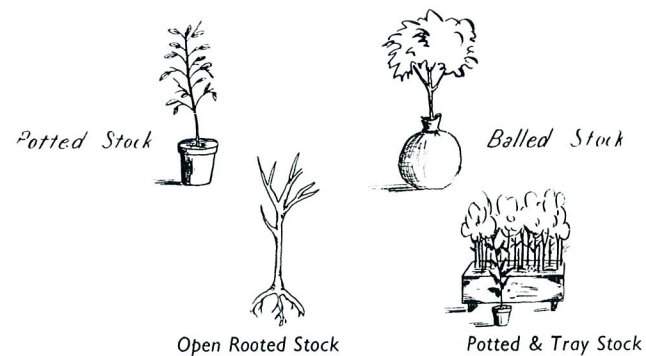
transferred from the nursery to the field with the minimum of risk and suffer little set back when planted out. Some root coiling is, however, unavoidable and the cost of production is very high.

(b) *Plants grown in trays*—a number being grown in the one container. This method is employed with those species which will tolerate some root damage but are not suitable for open root treatment. This method is used with some of the more vigorous Eucalypts and Canary Island Pine. Trees raised in this manner are somewhat cheaper than those under item 1 (a) and do not suffer from root coiling.

### 2.—Open Grown

(a) *Open Rooted Plants*.—Most pine species as well as deciduous trees are raised in open beds, from which they are lifted and transported to the planting site with their roots free of soil but damp packed in suitable wrapping material. This method has its greatest application in forestry projects where large numbers of a limited range of species are required at a minimum cost.

(b) *Balled Plants*.—Certain trees are raised in open beds but care is taken when lifting them to retain a ball of earth containing some of the roots, intact at the base. This is securely held by wrapping in hessian and binding with twine. This method finds its most general application with evergreen fruit trees—particularly citrus.



## PLANTING TIME

It is advisable to arrange for delivery of plants during the early winter. Early ordering usually ensures the best quality stock of the species

required. Early planting gives the young trees adequate time to become established before the following summer.

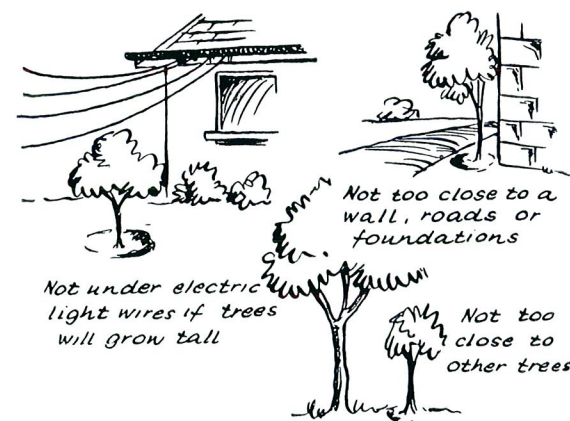
When trees are received from the nursery they should be immediately watered, care being taken to ensure that the water reaches the roots and is not diverted by wrapping and packing material.

Immediate planting is desirable but is not always possible. If trees have to be held for a time they should be kept in a sheltered, shaded position and given adequate water to ensure that their roots do not dry out.

## THE PLANTING SITE - SELECTION AND PREPARATION

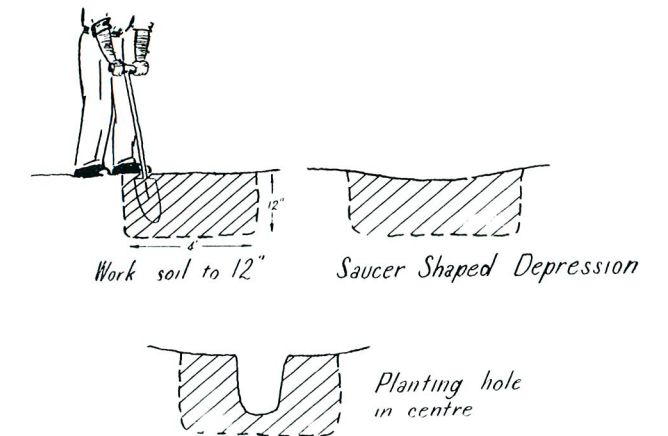
In selecting the planting site adequate space must be allowed for the tree's subsequent development. It should have little or no competition from the roots of surrounding established shrubs and trees.

With medium to large sized trees it is inadvisable to space closer than 20 to 25 ft., with even greater distances in the drier areas of the wheat belt.



In planting a line or group of trees it is advisable to thoroughly cultivate the site by at least two ploughings with an intervening period of eight to twelve months between them. This will eliminate scrub and ensure the minimum of root competition. Where trees are being planted individually and complete site cultivation is not practicable, each planting spot should be well

prepared. An area about 4 feet in diameter is cleared of debris and weeds and thoroughly worked to at least full spade depth. This should be then hollowed into a saucer-like depression about 3 in. deep and the tree planted in the centre.



For garden or park planting where trees will be regularly watered, more spectacular results may be obtained by excavating a hole a couple of feet deep and two or three feet in diameter and filling with well fertilised top soil. This is not advisable where trees will be dependent solely on the natural rainfall. In the latter case initial enrichment should be restricted to a couple of ounces of superphosphate, or blood and bone fertilizer. The use of nitrogenous fertilizers should be deferred for at least a year after planting.

## PLANTING

### Potted Stock

If trees are received still in the pots they should be thoroughly soaked before any attempt is made to remove them. Removal is made by turning the pot upside down and tapping the rim sharply with some solid object, holding the free hand beneath it to catch the soil cone as it is released. Before the tree is planted the soil cone should be examined. If there is a coil of roots at the bottom it should be cut off. It is advisable then to run a sharp knife down opposite sides of the cone cutting into it to a depth of about a quarter or

half an inch to sever any coiling roots. Short coiled root ends can be lightly teased out but the main soil cone should be kept intact.

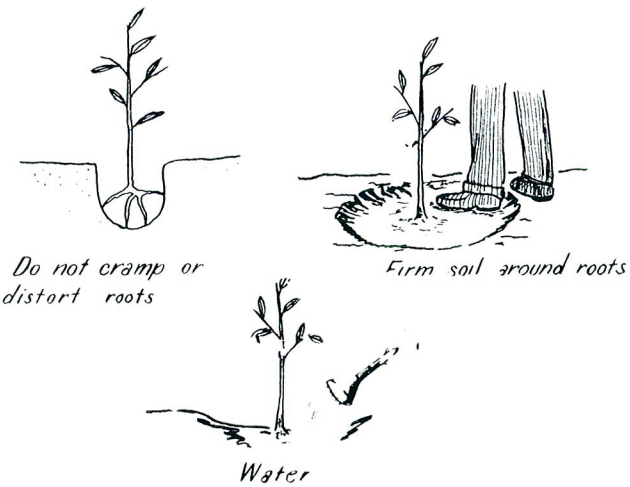
The tree should then be planted with the surface of the soil cone about an inch below the ground surface. After soil has been packed around the young tree—using the hands and feet for this—it should be given a gallon or two of water.

#### Tray Stock

Standard trays are made of jarrah and hold about two dozen plants. One side of the tray should be levered off so that the plants can be removed one at a time for planting. They are separated by drawing a knife between the rows of plants both along and across the tray, making sure that the cuts go right through to the bottom. Every effort should be made to keep the block of soil around each plant intact during the planting.

#### Open Rooted Plants

With open rooted plants considerable care needs to be taken to ensure that the roots are not allowed to become dry. Plants should be carried to and about the planting site in a wet bag or a box lined with wet hessian and with a flap of the same material for covering the roots. The planting hole should be large enough to enable



the roots to be spread and well separated without any coiling of the ends and deep enough for the tree to be set at least an inch deeper than it was in the nursery.

The filling soil should be pressed firmly around the tree and a gallon or so of water applied.

## WEEDING

Weed growth near young trees will rob them of both nutrients and moisture and by so doing hamper their development and possibly cause their death.

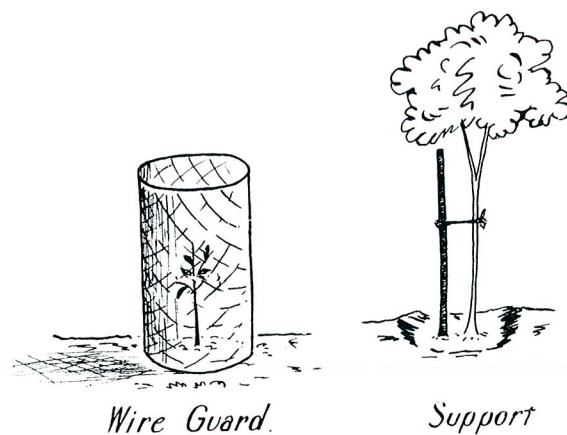
Aggressive plants such as veldt grass will respond in a spectacular manner to the fertilizer application and if not dealt with promptly may completely smother the young trees.

Removal of grass by cultivation either mechanically or by hand during late winter can do much to ensure a tree's survival through the critical first couple of years.

## PROTECTION

Adequate protection from rabbits and other animals—including in parts of the wheat belt galah cockatoos—is essential. A tubular guard a foot or so in diameter constructed of rabbit netting and held in place by two or more wooden stakes will provide protection against the smaller animals. If cockatoos are troublesome early protection can be given by pinching the top edge of the wire guard together. With larger stock complete exclusion by strong fencing is essential until the trees are at least from fifteen to twenty feet high. As a protection against wind damage, a straight stake inserted alongside the tree and about four inches from it will serve as a support to which it may be loosely attached by cord or binder twine.

Regular annual winter cultivation to keep down weeds will provide protection from fire.



## SUMMING UP

The main points to remember are:—

- Choose the right type of tree and one suitable for the soil and the locality.
- Use care in site selection, site preparation and in planting.
- Cultivate and weed regularly for the first couple of years. Occasional application of water during the hot weather will also assist survival and growth.
- Provide adequate protection from animals, fire, etc.

Careful observance of these points will go a long way towards ensuring complete success.



NCHEARY

A FORESTS DEPT  
PUBLICATION