

Timber Advisory Notes



Department of Conservation
and Land Management

CALM Timber Technology Weir Road Harvey WA 6220 (097) 29 1913 50 Hayman Road Como 6152 (09) 334 0333

11

Species: *Eucalyptus regnans* F. Muell.

Standard Trade Name: Mountain ash.

Common Names: Australian oak, stringy gum, swamp gum, Tasmanian oak, Victorian ash, white mountain ash.

1. Size of tree / type of forest: Mountain ash is the tallest hardwood species in the world, and is only exceeded in height by the redwoods of California. Under most conditions heights range from 55 m to 75 m, but measurements up to 100 m have been recorded. Mountain ash is native to Victoria and Tasmania. Best development is found on sheltered aspects in mountainous country with rainfall greater than 1100 mm, on deep friable clay loam soils.

2. Wood description: Heartwood pale pink-brown or pale straw. Sapwood not always clearly differentiated and up to 2.5 cm wide. The texture is open and coarse and the timber is straight grained with prominent growth rings.

3. Wood density:

Green density (kg/m ³):	About 1030 kg/m ³ .
Air-dry density (kg/m ³):	About 680 kg/m ³ (mature before reconditioning).
	About 630 kg/m ³ (mature after reconditioning).
Air-dry density (kg/m ³):	About 607 kg/m ³ (35 year-old -before reconditioning).
	About 548 kg/m ³ (35 year-old - after reconditioning).
Basic density (kg/m ³):	About 500 kg/m ³ (mature).
	About 425 kg/m ³ (35-year-old).

4. Drying and shrinkage:	<u>Tangential Shrinkage (%)</u>	<u>Radial Shrinkage (%)</u>
Before reconditioning:	13.0	6.5
After reconditioning:	7.0	4.0

5. Workability: Considerable collapse occurs during drying so reconditioning is standard practice for dressed products. Relatively easy to work, dresses and finishes well, has a light colour and readily accepts polishes and stains.

6. Durability Class: 4 Decay 4 Decay + termites (CSIRO revised ratings 1996).

7. Strength Groups: S4 and SD3.

8. Strength Properties:

Property	Units	Green	Dry
Modulus of Rupture	MPa	63	110
Modulus of Elasticity	MPa	13000	16000
Max Crushing Strength	MPa	30	63
Hardness	kN	3.4	4.9

9. Uses: General construction, house framing, architraves, marine craft, flooring, furniture, plywood, panelling tool handles. It is considered the best eucalypt in Australia for pulp and paper manufacture.

10. Availability: Readily available Victoria / Tasmania, available in other states. Sold with alpine ash as Victorian ash; or with alpine ash and messmate as Tasmanian oak.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Size of tree and type of forest

Small trees have average heights up to 15 m, medium 15 to 30 m, and large over 30 m. Types of forest are sclerophyll (with closed canopy), woodland (with scattered trees), or rain forest. Diameter breast height is stem diameter at 1.3 m above ground.

2. Wood description

For example, sapwood and heartwood colour, grain, figure

3. Wood density (kg/m³)

Green density is the density of wood in the living tree, defined as green mass divided by green volume, and useful for estimating transport costs. It varies with season and growing conditions. Air-dry density is the average mass divided by volume at 12 per cent moisture content (this is the average environmental condition in the coastal capital cities around Australia). Basic density is oven-dry mass divided by green volume. This measure has the advantage that moisture content variations are avoided.

4. Drying and shrinkage

As wood dries, it shrinks more in the tangential direction (i.e. parallel to the growth rings) than it does in the radial direction (i.e. at right angles to the growth rings). The figures given are shrinkage from green to 12 per cent moisture content, before and after steam reconditioning treatment. Reconditioning recovers any cells that may have collapsed during drying, and is essential for species such as the ash-type eucalypts.

5. Workability

Comments are made on the comparative ease or difficulty of turning, nailing and bending, on susceptibility to splitting and other working properties.

6. Durability

The CSIRO Durability Classes are based on the performance in ground of outer heartwood when exposed to fungal and termite attack. Class 1 gives more than 25 years life, Class 2 gives 15 to 25 years, Class 3 gives 8 to 15 years, and Class 4 less than eight years. The ratings are not relevant to above-ground use. In late 1996, CSIRO published revised ratings, which include termite susceptibility.

7. Strength grouping

In grading of structural timber, each species is allocated a ranking for green timber of S1 (strongest) to S7, and for seasoned timber SD1 (strongest) to SD8.

Minimum values for strength groups for green timber (units are MPa)

Strength property	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
Modulus of rupture	103	86	73	62	52	43	36
Modulus of elasticity	16300	14200	12400	10700	9100	7900	6900
Maximum crushing strength	52	43	36	31	26	22	18

Minimum values for strength groups for seasoned timber (units are MPa)

Strength property	SD1	SD2	SD3	SD4	SD5	SD6	SD7	SD8
Modulus of rupture	150	130	110	94	78	65	55	45
Modulus of elasticity	21500	18500	16000	14000	12500	10500	9100	7900
Maximum crushing strength	80	70	61	54	47	41	36	30

8. Strength Properties

Values are from Bootle, K.R. (1983). 'Wood in Australia. Types, properties and uses'. (McGraw-Hill)

9. Uses

Various past and potential uses are given, but the list is obviously not conclusive.

10. Availability

Timber from many species is available only near the areas that the trees grow naturally or in plantations. Imported timbers and their current availability are identified.