

Native street and garden trees in South East Queensland



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Cover photo: Gold Coast campus of Griffith University by Catherine Pickering

Back cover: Gold Coast University Hospital by Catherine Pickering

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CATHERINE PICKERING

Acknowledgement of Country

Griffith University acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including the traditional custodians of South East Queensland. We pay respect to the Elders, past, present, and emerging, extending that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Griffith University is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contributions to society.

Biodiversity of South East Queensland

The South East Queensland bioregion is a subtropical area of around 78,000 km² with high biodiversity including around 4,500 species of native plants across a diversity of ecosystems. This includes subtropical rainforests, open eucalypt forests, wetlands, heaths, mangroves, and coastal dunes, with more than 145 Regional Ecosystems within the bioregion. There are hundreds of South East Queensland native plants in cultivation, including species used as street trees. Further details about native plants in South East Queensland are available in books such as *Mangroves to Mountains*, published by the Logan Branch of Native Plants Queensland.

About this guide

This book provides details of 40 species of trees, mostly native to South East Queensland, that have been identified as suitable urban/street trees by one or more local councils in the region. It can be used when selecting trees as well as identifying exciting trees in our cities. For each species it includes information about size, light, soil and water requirements, flowers and fruit, along with where the species occurs naturally and biodiversity benefits.

This guide was produced by Luke Spanner as part of his Work Integrated Learning course under the supervision of Professor Catherine Pickering. We thank the many experts who provided us with advice and suggestions for the book. Although the information in the book is based on a range of reliable sources, the condition of individual trees vary and so no liability is accepted here as a result of selecting a tree from this book.



Why grow native trees?

Growing local native trees has numerous benefits for the environment, our streets, gardens and parks. They are already adapted to the local climate, soils, and pests, and hence can require less water and fertiliser. As they are often hardy, they can also require less maintenance. They provide habitat and food for native animals including birds, bees and butterflies, supporting local biodiversity and ecosystem processes such as pollination and seed dispersal. Growing native trees helps us conserve and protect local flora and prevent the loss of genetic diversity. Finally, native trees provide a sense of place and bring beauty and interest to our cities, towns, streets, parks and gardens, with a range of shapes, sizes, and colours that reflect our local environment. Overall, growing native trees is an excellent way to create sustainable and beautiful cities, while benefiting the environment and preserving local biodiversity.

Native trees can be sourced from city councils, branches of Native Plants Queensland and other plant groups, Landcare and catchment groups as well as local nurseries. Some species can be easy to find even in larger sized pots, while others may need to be grown to a suitable size before planting.

Benefits and issues with urban trees

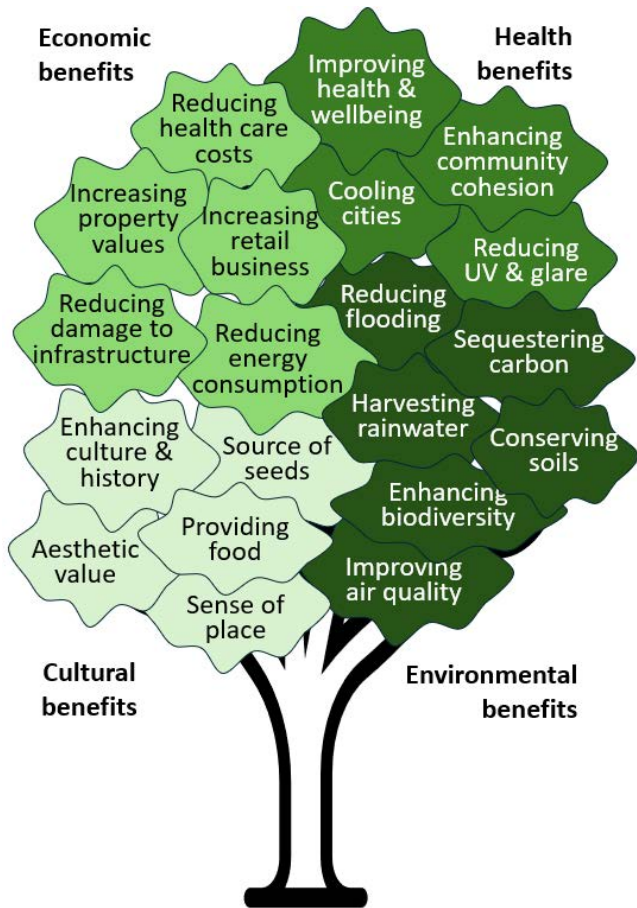
Trees in cities provide a wide range of economic, health, environmental and cultural benefits. Key to maximising these benefits is selecting the right tree for the right place and ensuring that it is healthy.

Increasing urban canopy cover enhances sustainability in cities, with local council websites containing useful information about suitable trees for a range of urban settings. We have used these sites and other reliable sources, experience with trees on our campuses, as well as input from arborists and other experts to compile this guide. However, as we continue to learn about these species, including how they respond in different urban settings, and their resilience to extreme climatic events and emerging diseases and pests, information will evolve over time.

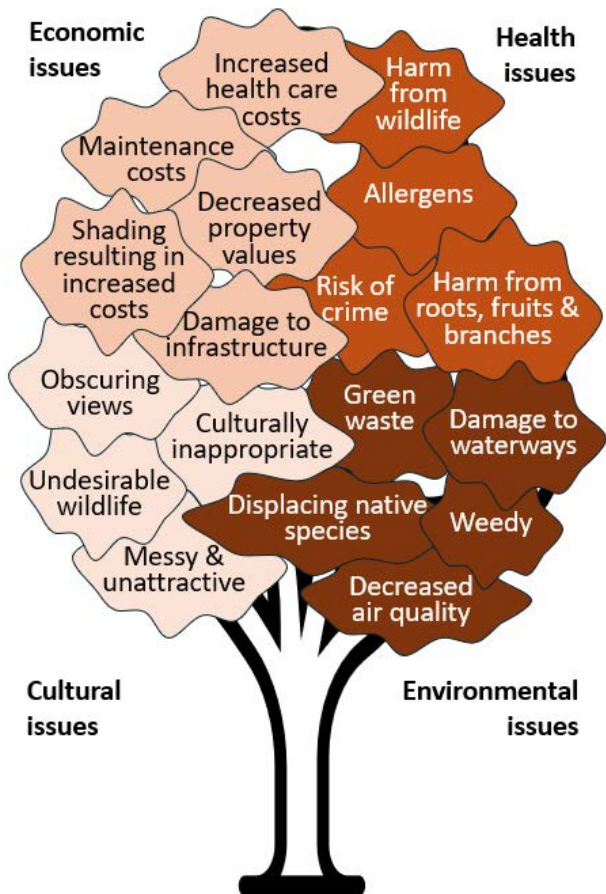


CATHERINE PICKERING

Right tree in the right place



Wrong tree in the wrong place



Supporting urban trees

We need to take care of urban trees. This includes careful site and species selection, preparation and maintenance. Trees can only be planted with the authorisation of landowners. On streets and close to buildings there can be severe competition for space both above and below ground from pipes, walls, fences, roads, paths, powerlines and other infrastructure. As a result, there may be formal offset distances for trees relating to services, verge and path widths and types of roads. There are safety issues to factor in including the size and shape of the tree when fully grown, as well as minimising trip and other hazards from roots, falling branches, fruit and seeds, and allergic reactions.

Light, soil and moisture conditions need to be suitable to ensure good growth. When planting, ensure the tree is healthy, not root bound, and free from pests and diseases. Take care not to damage the root ball during planting and provide support/protection during establishment. Minimise damage from vandalism, pests and diseases where possible and avoid ring barking trees with whipper snippers. Careful pruning may be required to maintain the size and shape of the tree including maintaining clear sightlines near building entrances, driveways, carparks, roads, footpaths and intersections.

Local councils have detailed specifications including offset distances, species and maintenance requirements for trees in a range of public areas. This information and other professional advice will result in better outcomes for people and trees in our cities.



LUKE SPANNER, CATHERINE PICKERING

Griffith University





The three main campuses of Griffith University in Brisbane, Logan and the Gold Coast conserve and support hundreds of native plants and animals. In particular, the Gold Coast campus, showcases native plants suitable for public spaces, including urban trees, with over 230 types of native plants across more than 10 ha of gardens. These gardens provide a wide range of benefits to staff, students and the community including storing and sequestering carbon, cooling, reducing UV glare and reflection, controlling wind, improving air quality, filtering air pollutants, improving stormwater quality, reducing surface flow and flooding risk, reducing soil erosion, improving soil quality, reducing infrastructure damage and renewal costs, reducing energy expenditure, and providing habitat for wildlife including birds, bees and butterflies. They also improve community cohesion, health and well-being, enhance social behaviour and public safety, provide cultural, spiritual and social meaning, enhance a sense of place and conserve pre-settlement vegetation. Finally they act as living laboratories for assessing green solutions as well as fostering a sense of fun, play and joy. Please feel free to visit our campuses.

Structure of the book and icons

In this guide, the trees are arranged into size groups based on height and spread: **1) Small (<10 m)**, **2) Medium (10-20 m)**, **3) Tall (20-30 m)** and **4) Very tall trees (>30 m)**. Within each size category, trees are listed in alphabetical order by their scientific name. The heights and widths are estimates, as they vary depending on growing conditions. The size and form of trees is important particularly if near powerlines.

Icons

Throughout this booklet, the growing requirements of species are indicated using the following icons:

Icon	About
	Tree height (small, medium or tall)
	Water requirements (low, moderate or lots)
	Flowering period and colour
	Form of the tree (round, upright, conical, weeping or spreading)

Acmena (Syzygium) smithii



MARK RUNKOVSKI



5-10 metres



Low once established



Creamy-yellow flowers through spring and summer



Round form

Description

Lilly Pilly is a versatile evergreen shrub to small tree, widely used for hedging, street planting, or as a standalone feature tree. In cultivation it typically grows between 5 to 10 metres tall and roughly 3 to 5 metres wide. It has dense, glossy foliage and often has attractive pink flushes of new growth. The tree grows well in a full sun or part shade in well-drained soils. Once established it is low-maintenance, and generally resistant to many pests and can be pruned to shape when needed.

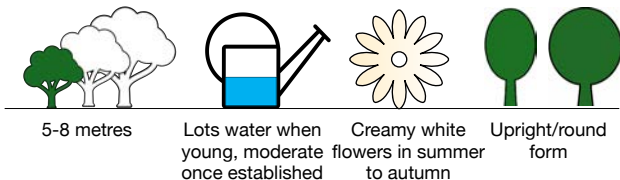
This species occurs naturally along the east coast of Australia, from northern Queensland through New South Wales and into Victoria. Lilly Pilly produces clusters of creamy-yellow flowers in spring and summer, followed by berry-like fruits that range in colour from pale pink to dark red. These fruits are eaten by birds, while its dense foliage provides habitat for wildlife. Whether grown as a feature tree, screen, hedge, or street tree it suits a range of situations. Planting cultivars that are more resistant to myrtle rust is recommended.

Backhousia citriodora



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Lemon Scented Ironwood



Description

Lemon Scented Ironwood, also referred to as Lemon Myrtle, is a small evergreen tree commonly planted in streetscapes, parks, and gardens for its neat form and scented foliage. In cultivation it usually grows 5 to 8 metres tall with a spread of 3 to 5 metres. It develops a dense rounded crown with greenish-grey leaves with smooth and pale bark and responds well to pruning. The tree prefers full sun to light shade in well-drained, moist soils. Young trees benefit from regular watering, while older trees need less water, are hardy and can tolerate light frost.

This species occurs naturally in the subtropical rainforests of Queensland near Brisbane and Mackay, and further inland. Flowering occurs from late summer into autumn, producing clusters of creamy-white flowers at the ends of branches attracting bees and other pollinators. The foliage releases a strong lemon scent when crushed, and the oil is used commercially and is culturally significant. Lemon Myrtle is well suited to both public streetscapes, parks and gardens.

Cassia brewsteri



HUYEN MY NGUYEN

Leichhardt Bean



10 metres



Low once
established



Cream flowers
through spring and
summer



Round form

Description

Leichhardt Bean is a small to medium tree recognised for its foliage, shade and compact form. In cultivation it reaches around 5 to 10 metres tall, but can grow to 20 metres in its natural habitat, and around 5 metres wide. The bark is brownish, and new growth often has a touch of red. The tree thrives in full sun to part shade on well-drained soils. Once established it is hardy, and tolerant of drier sites.

This species occurs naturally in dry rainforest areas in eastern Queensland down into northern parts of New South Wales. Flowering takes place from spring to early summer, producing small cream blossoms in clusters. These are followed by yellow seed capsules that split to reveal a black and orange seed. The fruit attracts birds and butterflies, including the Hairy Lineblue and other insects. With its hardiness and wildlife benefits, the Leichhardt Bean is suitable for many streetscapes, parks, and gardens.

Elaeocarpus reticulatus



Blueberry Ash



< 10 metres



Moderate once established



Pale pink flowers in summer



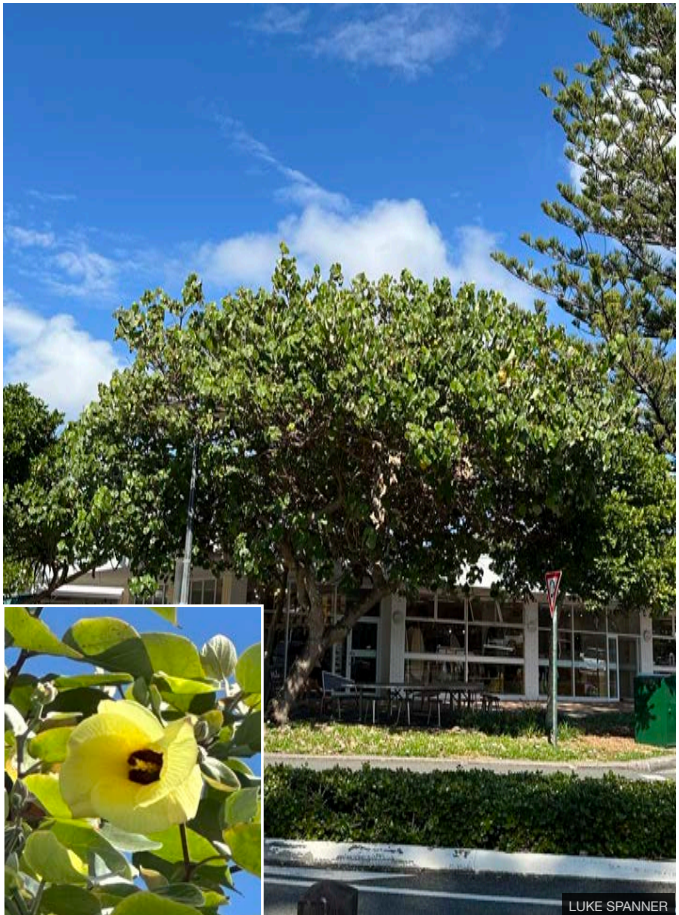
Conical/
Upright form

Description

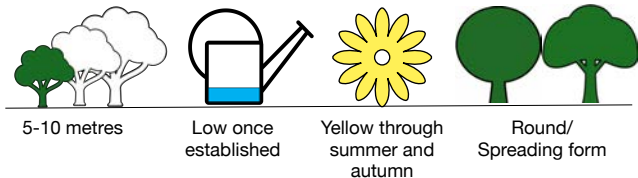
Blueberry Ash is a smaller evergreen tree commonly planted in gardens, parks, and as a screen. In cultivation it usually grows 3 to 10 metres tall and 3 to 5 metres wide. It usually has a conical form with smooth grey bark and glossy leaves that turn red before falling. The tree is suited to full sun or partial shade in well-drained soils. It needs moderate water and a good soil volume when young and can be pruned to shape if required.

This species is naturally found from South East Queensland through coastal New South Wales and into Victoria. It grows in a variety of habitats such as rainforests and coastal areas. Flowering occurs in summer with clusters of delicate white or pale pink bell-shaped flowers followed by blue berries that can stay on the tree for months. The flowers and fruit attract a range of birds and insects. With a range of cultivated forms, a compact size and form, Blueberry Ash is an attractive choice for many locations but benefits from watering, additional nutrients and limited competition from grass.

Hibiscus tiliaceus



Cottonwood Tree



Description

Cottonwood Tree is a small to medium evergreen tree. In cultivation it usually reaches 5 to 10 metres tall with a broad canopy, creating shade. The large heart shaped leaves give it a lush appearance, while the bark is smooth when young it becomes fissured with age. There is a very attractive red leaved form that is also popular. This tree grows best in full sun on sandy or clay soils, even when exposed to salt and wind. It is suited to coastal plantings and can be pruned to shape. With leaf and flower shedding, it can require some maintenance, so best used as a feature tree closer to the coast.

In Queensland it is widespread along beaches, estuaries, and tidal creeks, and is also found in northern New South Wales, the Northern Territory, and some Pacific islands. Flowering occurs mainly in summer and autumn, producing large, short lived bright yellow blooms, which turn red with age. Bees and birds are drawn to the nectar, and the dense canopy provides shelter for wildlife.

Hymenosporum flavum

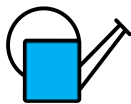


BAILEY SPARROW

Native Frangipani



< 10 metres



Lots when young



Yellow flowers in spring



Upright/round form

Description

Native Frangipani is a glossy medium-sized evergreen tree often grown in gardens, parks, and along streets for its form, scent and flowers. In cultivation it typically reaches 10 metres tall, though wild trees may grow up to 25 metres. Its leaves are glossy and are often clustered at the end of the branches while the smooth grey bark fissures with maturity. The tree grows best in full sun to partial shade and prefers well-drained to moist soils but can struggle in a street setting. Once established it is hardy, tolerates light frost, and responds well to pruning.

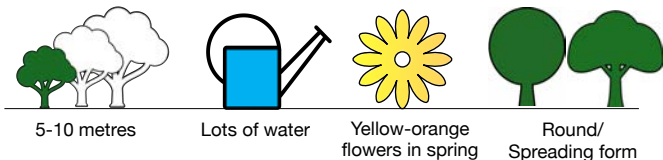
This species is naturally found in the coastal regions of Queensland, near Cairns, down into New South Wales and also extends into New Guinea. It grows on the edges of rainforests and wet sclerophyll forests. In spring it produces clusters of scented, tubular creamy flowers that turn a bright yellow. The flowers attract bees and nectar-feeding birds, while the neat form and fragrance make it a popular choice for gardens, parks and streets.

Lepiderema pulchella



HANNAH CHAMBERS

Fine-leaved Tuckeroo



Description

Fine-leaved Tuckeroo is a small tree with a neat crown and attractive fine-textured foliage. In cultivation it usually grows 8 to 10 metres tall with a dense, rounded canopy providing lots of shade. The bark is grey-brown and smooth, with new leaves pink and older leaves glossy green. It grows best in full sun to partial shade in moist, well-drained soils. Once established it can adapt well to urban conditions, making it suitable for gardens, parks, and street planting.

In Queensland it occurs naturally along coastal and riverine rainforest, extending south into northern New South Wales. It is listed as Vulnerable due to habitat loss, so growing it in cities helps support its conservation. Flowering takes place from spring into summer, producing clusters of small yellow to orange blooms. These are followed by showy orange to brown fruit that add colour well into summer and attract birds. With its manageable size and stunning form, the Fine-leaved Tuckeroo is a practical choice for streets and gardens.

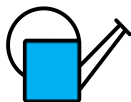
Melaleuca salicina (*Callistemon salignus*)



White Bottlebrush



10 metres



Lots of water



Cream to white
flowers in spring
and summer



Weeping form

Description

White Bottlebrush is a hardy small tree known for its hanging foliage and cream to white brush-like flowers. In cultivation it usually grows to 10 metres tall and around 5 metres wide. Young shoots often have a flush of pink or red foliage adding colour. It grows best in full sun and adapts to a wide range of soils, including sandy, clay, and other poorly drained sites. Once established it is tough in wetter sites.

In Queensland it is found along waterways, floodplains, and its natural range extends south through New South Wales into Victoria. Flowering occurs from late spring through summer with cream to white bottlebrush spikes. The flowers are rich in nectar and attract birds, bees, and other pollinators. Seed capsules follow the flowering and often remain on the stems for long periods. With its weeping habit, profuse flowering, and hardiness in multiple soil conditions, White Bottlebrush is well suited to coastal landscapes, parks, and street plantings.

Melaleuca (Callistemon) viminalis



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Weeping Bottlebrush



10 metres



Moderate



Red flowers late
spring to early
autumn



Weeping form

Description

Weeping Bottlebrush is a small hardy tree with a naturally drooping form. In cultivation it usually grows between 6 to 10 metres tall with a rounded crown and a spread of about 5 metres. The bark is greyish and the leaves are bright green with a pleasant scent when crushed. It grows best in full sun with moist, well-drained soils but can tolerate a range of conditions. Once established it handles both wet and dry periods, making it well suited to gardens, parks, and streets.

In Queensland it is naturally found along creeks, rivers, and in wet eucalypt forests, and its range extends south into New South Wales and parts of Western Australia. Flowering occurs mainly in spring and summer, with masses of red flower spikes full of nectar that attract birds, bees and butterflies. Following the flowers there are woody capsules that remain on the stems for extended periods. With its intense flowering, toughness and shape, the Weeping Bottlebrush makes for a lovely street tree and there are several cultivars. The image shows the consequence of site selection close to a wall.

Syzygium luehmannii



LUKE SPANNER

Small-leaved Lilly Pilly



10 metres



Low once established



Cream flowers in early summer



Round form

Description

Small-leaved Lilly Pilly is a versatile, smaller-sized evergreen that works well as both a feature tree and a screen in streets and gardens. In cultivation it typically grows 6 to 10 metres tall and around 5 metres wide, but in its natural rainforest habitat it grows taller to 30 metres. It has a dense, slightly weeping crown and glossy foliage. It grows best in full sun to partial shade and adapts to various soils, from loams to sandy well-drained soils. Once established it tolerates light frost and is relatively low-maintenance, and can be pruned to shape.

This species is native to coastal rainforests from southern Queensland through to northern New South Wales, and parts of New Guinea. It flowers in summer, producing fluffy cream blossoms that are followed by clusters of bright red fruit. The fruit are eaten by birds and other wildlife, while its dense growth provides shade as well as nesting sites for small birds.

Alectryon connatus



Hairy Alectryon



5-15 metres



Low once established



Greenish-yellow flowers through winter and autumn



Round form

Description

Hairy Alectryon is a small to medium tree that grows well in streetscapes, gardens, and plantings. In cultivation it grows around 5 to 15 metres tall, with a rounded form and a spread of around 5 metres. The bark is grey and smooth when young, becoming slightly rougher with age. Its foliage is distinctive, with fine hairs covering the new growth and giving the tree a soft appearance. It grows best in full sun to partial shade and grows well on a variety of soils, provided they are well drained. Once established it is hardy and requires little maintenance.

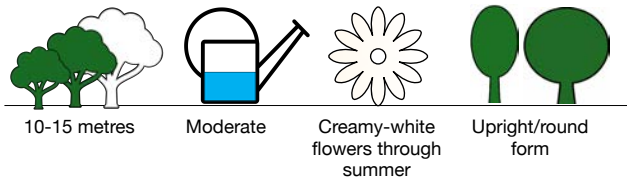
This species occurs naturally in Queensland, from the south-east up through Cape York Peninsula, and parts of New Guinea. It is commonly found in littoral rainforests. Flowering occurs from late winter into autumn with small greenish-yellow flowers. These are followed by bright orange pods that split open and attract birds and insects.

Auranticarpa (Pittosporum) rhombifolia



LUKE SPANNER, HUYEN MY NGUYEN

Diamond-leaf Pittosporum



10-15 metres

Moderate

Creamy-white
flowers through
summer

Upright/round
form

Description

Diamond-leaf Pittosporum is a popular ornamental tree for streetscapes and parks due to its neat shape and colourful fruit. In cultivation it usually grows 10 to 15 metres tall with a rounded crown and a similar width. The leaves are glossy and diamond-shaped, giving the tree its name, while the bark is greyish with a corky texture. It grows best in full sun or partial shade and prefers moist, well-drained soils. It does not do well in waterlogged areas and is easily damaged by mowers.

This species is naturally found in eastern Australia, from southern Queensland to northern New South Wales, where it grows on the edges of rainforests, and woodlands and has been naturalised in Western Australia. Flowering occurs in summer, producing clusters of small creamy-white blooms with a pleasant fragrance. These are followed by bright orange fruit that remain on the tree for many months attracting fruit eating birds. Its shape and scented flowers makes this tree an ideal choice for larger gardens, parks and streets.

Banksia integrifolia



Coastal Banksia



20 metres



Low



Pale yellow flowers
from autumn
through spring



Upright form

Description

Coastal Banksia is a beautiful hardy tree that is well suited to coastal streets, parks and gardens. In cultivation it can reach up to 20 metres in height and a spread of 5 metres, though in exposed coastal areas it is often slower growing and remains smaller. The canopy is very open, allowing light to filter through, and the leaves have a silvery underside that gives the tree a distinctive look. This species prefers full sun to partial shade and does best in sandy, well-drained soils but not clay. Once established it tolerates salt spray, wind, drought, and nutrient-poor conditions.

In Queensland it occurs along the coast and its range continues south through New South Wales and into Victoria. Flowering occurs from autumn through spring, producing spikes of hundreds of small pale yellow flowers that are rich in nectar. These attract bees, butterflies, and birds, while the cones provide food for wildlife and it is culturally significant. Coastal Banksia also helps stabilise sandy soils, making it a great choice for coastal streets, gardens and parks.

Brachychiton acerifolius



LUKE SPANNER, CATHERINE PICKERING



10-20 metres



Low once established



Red flowers in spring and summer



Round/
Spreading form

Description

Flame Tree is a medium growing deciduous tree best known for its mass floral display. In cultivation it usually grows 10 to 20 metres tall and around 10 metres wide, forming a broad, umbrella shaped canopy. The trunk is smooth, green when young and turns grey when matured. It has large glossy leaves that can vary in shape, but are usually lobbed and can be shed prior to flowering. It grows best in full sun or light shade and suits a range of well-drained soils. Once established it tolerates dry periods and is relatively low maintenance, making it suitable for streetscapes, parks, and open spaces although it can be messy when shedding leaves, flowers and fruit.

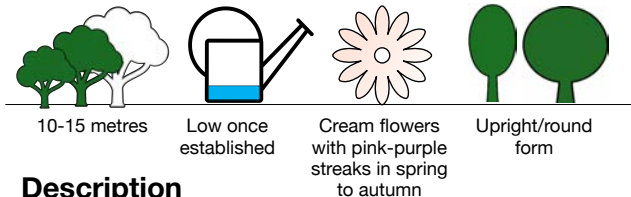
In Queensland it grows naturally in coastal rainforests and its range extends south through New South Wales. Flowering occurs in spring and summer with clusters of red blooms on the often bare branches followed by large seed pods that contain irritating hairs. The mass of red flowers attract birds and butterflies, making it a striking feature tree in urban areas.

Brachychiton populneus



MARK RUNKOVSKI

Kurrajong Tree



Description

Kurrajong is a small to medium tree that is both attractive and very drought tolerant. In cultivation it usually grows 10 to 15 metres tall, though in ideal conditions it may reach up to 20 metres. It has a dense canopy that provides excellent shade. The bark is smooth and green when young, becoming grey and slightly fissured as the tree ages. This species grows best in full sun in well-drained soil and is low-maintenance once established.

In Queensland it grows across both coastal and inland areas, and its natural range continues into New South Wales and Victoria. Flowering occurs from late spring through autumn, with cream flowers streaked with pink or purple throats. These are rich in nectar and attract bees and other pollinators. With its ability to be pruned to shape, resilience and shade, the Kurrajong Tree makes a lovely ornamental suitable for streets, gardens, and parks.

Brachychiton rupestris



LUKE SPANNER

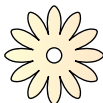
Narrow-leaved Bottle Tree



20 metres



Low once established



Cream to pale yellow flowers in spring



Round/spreading form

Description

Narrow-leaved Bottle Tree is an iconic slow-growing tree, with its distinctive bottle shaped trunk. In cultivation it generally reaches 20 metres in height and a 10 metre spread, while in its natural habitat it may grow larger. The trunk helps the tree survive in harsh conditions. The crown is rounded and dense, with leaves shed in the warmer drier months. It grows best in full sun in well-drained soils in areas with a wide verge. Once established it tolerates heat, frost, and long dry periods, making it a hardy choice for wide streetscapes, roundabouts, parks, and larger gardens.

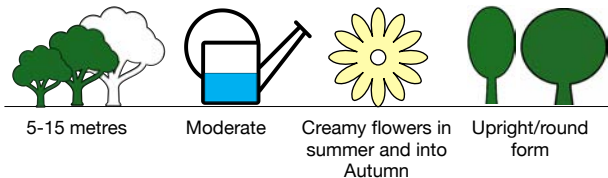
In Queensland it occurs naturally in inland regions with soils that are shallow and low in nutrients. Flowering takes place in spring with cream to pale yellow blooms that can be pink inside and are followed by large seedpods. Narrow-leaved Bottle Tree is both a functional and attractive tree for a wide range of settings.

Buckinghamia celsissima



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Ivory Curl Tree



Description

Ivory Curl Tree is a medium sized evergreen that produces masses of cream flower spikes and has a dense, glossy canopy. In cultivation it usually grows 5 to 15 metres tall with a spread of around 5 metres, although in rainforest it can reach up to 30 metres. The crown is rounded and tidy, the bark is smooth and pale, and the leaves are dark green. It grows best in full sun to light shade in moist, well-drained soils. Young plants benefit from regular watering, while mature trees tolerate dry periods and are low-maintenance.

In the wild it occurs in far north Queensland, where it grows naturally in rainforests. Flowering begins in summer and extends into autumn, when its iconic long creamy-white blooms appear, filling the canopy and attracting bees, butterflies, and nectar-feeding birds. With its beautiful show, manageable size, easy maintenance and popularity with pollinators, the Ivory Curl Tree makes an excellent choice for streets and parks.

Cupaniopsis anacardioides



CATHERINE PICKERING



8-15 metres



Low



Greenish-yellow
flowers in
spring



Round form

Description

Tuckeroo is a hardy evergreen tree well suited to coastal streetscapes, parks, and gardens. In cultivation it grows 8 to 15 metres tall with a rounded form spreading up to 10 metres wide. The bark is smooth and grey, sometimes showing an orange layer beneath as it matures. It grows best in full sun or light shade and tolerates a range of soils, including sandy or salty soils.

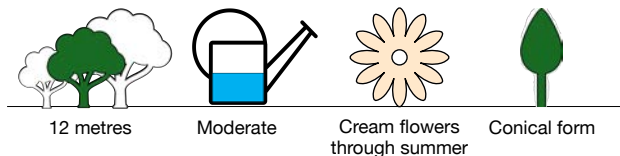
This species is naturally found along the coast of Queensland and northern New South Wales, where it grows in coastal rainforests and near sand dunes. Flowering occurs in spring, with clusters of greenish-yellow blooms followed by bright orange-yellow seed capsules in summer. These fruits attract birds and insects, supporting local biodiversity. With its resilience and compact form, Tuckeroo has become a very popular tree for streets, parks and gardens.

Elaeocarpus eumundi



CATHERINE PICKERING

Eumundi Quandong



Description

Eumundi Quandong is a medium sized rainforest tree with a dense conical crown and glossy foliage. In cultivation it generally reaches around 12 metres in height, though it can grow taller in its natural habitat. The bark is grey and smooth, and it has dark green leaves which form a dense canopy, with flushes of attractive red to pink new growth. This species grows best in full sun to partial shade in fertile, moist soils in warm, humid areas.

In Queensland it occurs from Cape York Peninsula through the north-east and its range extends into northern New South Wales. Flowering occurs in early summer with clusters of small, fragrant cream flowers, followed by bright blue fruits that add colour and attract birds. With its lovely shape, glossy canopy, and dense foliage often to the ground, Eumundi Quandong is well suited as a screening plant in avenues, parks, and larger gardens, while as a street tree removal of lower branches is recommended to enhance sightlines.

Elaeocarpus obovatus

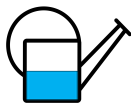


LUKE SPANNER

Hard Quandong



10-15 metres



Moderate



White flowers in
spring



Conical/
upright form

Description

Hard Quandong is a hardy rainforest tree that can vary greatly in size depending on conditions. In cultivation it typically grows 10 to 15 metres tall with a canopy spread of 6 to 10 metres, though in favourable rainforest environments it can reach 40 metres. The bark is a light grey colour, with a smooth to corky texture and the foliage is bright green. It prefers full sun to light shade and grows best in rich, moist, well-drained soils. This is a fast-growing tree that provides dense shade and is hardy once established.

In Queensland it is found along the coast and its natural range extends as far south as Sydney. It occurs in varied rainforests, and is also found in drier forests. Flowering occurs in spring with clusters of small, white blooms, followed by blue fruit in late summer to autumn. The flowers attract nectar-feeding birds and insects while the dense foliage provides habitat. Hard Quandong's resilience and form make it a reliable choice for parks, avenues and streetscapes.

Harpullia pendula





15 metres



Low once
established



Greenish-yellow
flowers from spring
into summer



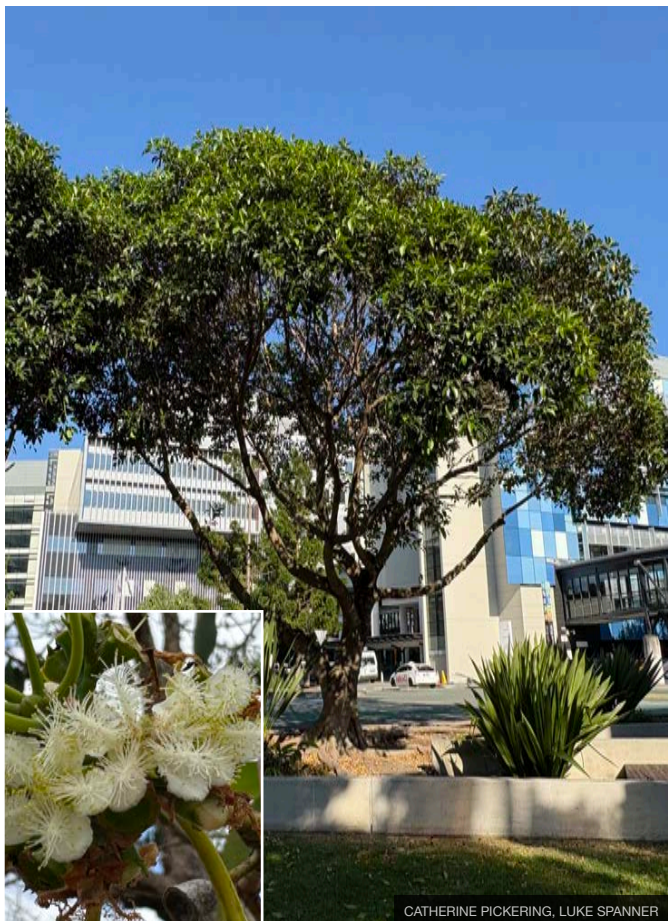
Round form

Description

Tulipwood is a small to medium sized evergreen tree with a neat, rounded canopy and glossy leaves. In cultivation it usually grows 10 to 15 metres tall, while in natural rainforest it may reach up to 25 metres. The trunk is straight with smooth grey bark, and the dense crown provides good shade. It grows best in full sun to partial shade in moist well-drained soils. Once established it adapts to a range of soil types, tolerates dry periods, and is considered a reliable, low-maintenance option.

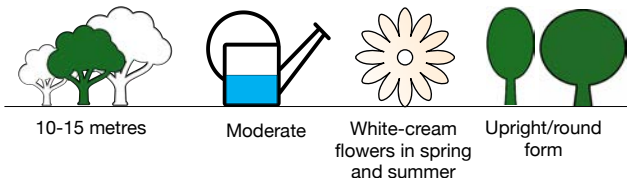
In Queensland it is found in coastal rainforests and its range extends south into northern New South Wales. Flowering occurs from spring into summer with clusters of small greenish yellow flowers. These are followed by bright orange fruit capsules that open to reveal its black seeds, which attract native birds. With its manageable size, and non-invasive root system, Tulipwood is an excellent choice for streetscapes, coastal plantings, and parks.

Lophostemon confertus



CATHERINE PICKERING, LUKE SPANNER

Queensland Brush Box



Description

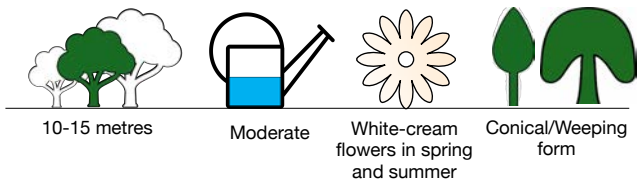
Brush Box is a hardy evergreen tree that provides great shade for streets, parks, and gardens. In cultivation it usually grows 10 to 15 metres tall with a rounded canopy spreading 5 to 10 metres wide. The trunk is rough, darker in colour at the base, and becomes reddish higher up. This species grows well in full sun to partial shade on a wide range of soils, from loams to heavy clay. It is low maintenance, rarely dropping limbs, making it suitable for urban settings.

Brush Box grows naturally along the Queensland coast into northern New South Wales. In spring and summer it produces clusters of small creamy-white flowers that attract bees, birds, and other pollinators, followed by woody seed capsules. With its dense foliage, manageable form, and resilience, Brush Box remains a dependable tree for many urban settings.

Lophostemon suavelons



CATHERINE PICKERING, LUKE SPANNER



Description

Swamp Box is a beautiful, hardy evergreen tree often used as a feature in parks, street plantings, and wetlands. In cultivation it typically grows 10 to 15 metres tall with a similar spread, though it can reach around 30 metres in the wild. It has a conical or slightly weeping form, flaky brown bark, and glossy foliage. It thrives in full sun to partial shade and grows well on range of soils from clay to sandy loams, and can even tolerate poor drainage to swampy ground.

It is naturally found along the Queensland coast and into northern New South Wales, where it grows in swamp forests, riparian zones, and sclerophyll woodlands. Flowering occurs in spring to early summer, with clusters of creamy-white blossoms that are softly scented and attract nectar-feeding insects and birds. The fruits are woody capsules that release seeds over time.

Melaleuca quinquenervia



CATHERINE PICKERING

Broad-leaved Paperbark



8-15 metres



Low once
established



White flowers late
spring to early
autumn



Upright/
weeping form

Description

Broad-leaved Paperbark is a hardy tree well known for its distinctive papery bark and ability to thrive in wet environments. In cultivation it typically grows 8 to 15 metres tall, with some specimens reaching up to 25 metres. It grows best in full sun to partial shade and adapts readily to wet, sandy, or silty soils. Once established it tolerates both flooding and dry periods, making it useful for waterlogged areas such as wetlands and swales, as well as shade for streets and parks.

In Queensland it is widespread along the coast in swamps, floodplains, and riverbanks, and its natural range extends south into New South Wales and north into New Guinea. Flowering occurs from late spring to early autumn, producing spikes of white blooms, followed by its distinctive woody seed capsules. Flowers provide nectar for bees, butterflies, birds, and bats, while the bark offers habitat for other small creatures. With its toughness and habitat value, Broad-leaved Paperbark is an effective plant for wet sites.

Podocarpus elatus



CATHERINE PICKERING



10-15 metres



Low



Female and male
cone seeds appear
on separate trees



Round form

Description

Plum Pine is a fast growing evergreen conifer suited for wide streets, larger gardens and parks including as a feature or shade tree. In cultivation it typically reaches 10 to 15 metres tall with a similar spread, forming a thick, rounded canopy, although it can reach 30 metres. It has dark green leaves and greyish-brown bark which eventually becomes fissured. This species thrives in full sun to partial shade on a variety of soils, including clay, loam, and sandy soils. Although needing lots of water when young once established it is hardy and requires less water.

This species is native to eastern Australia, in coastal and sub-coastal regions of Queensland, and New South Wales. Female and male cones are produced on separate trees and are attached to branches by a fleshy blue-black stem that resembles a fruit and are popular with some birds. Plum Pine's attractive form, longevity and fast growth make it a practical choice for larger sites in parks and streets and it is culturally significant.

Stenocarpus sinuatus

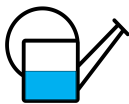


LUKE SPANNER , CATHERINE PICKERING

Firewheel Tree



10-15 metres



Moderate



Red-orange
flowers through
summer to autumn



Upright form

Description

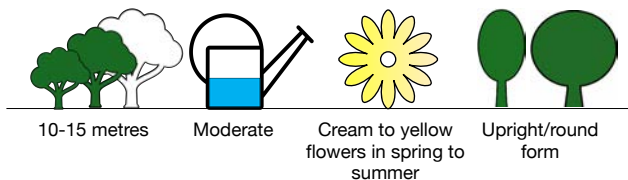
The Firewheel Tree is a striking evergreen tree planted as a feature in streets, parks, and large gardens. In cultivation it usually grows 10 to 15 metres tall and 6 metres wide, although in its natural rainforest habitat it can reach up to 30 metres with a broader spread. It develops a straight trunk with rough, grey bark and carries a dense, rounded crown. Firewheel trees grow best in full sun or partial shade, prefer rich, well-drained soils and grow best with lots of care.

This tree is native to eastern Queensland, particularly in tropical and subtropical rainforests, and extends into northern New South Wales and New Guinea. Flowering in summer to autumn, it produces masses of bright red to orange clusters of flowers in circular arrangements that resemble wheels. These flowers are rich in nectar and attract birds and insects. After flowering, woody capsules form and release seeds. With its manageable size, Firewheel Tree is an excellent choice for parks, gardens, and street scapes.

Tristaniopsis laurina



CATHERINE PICKERING

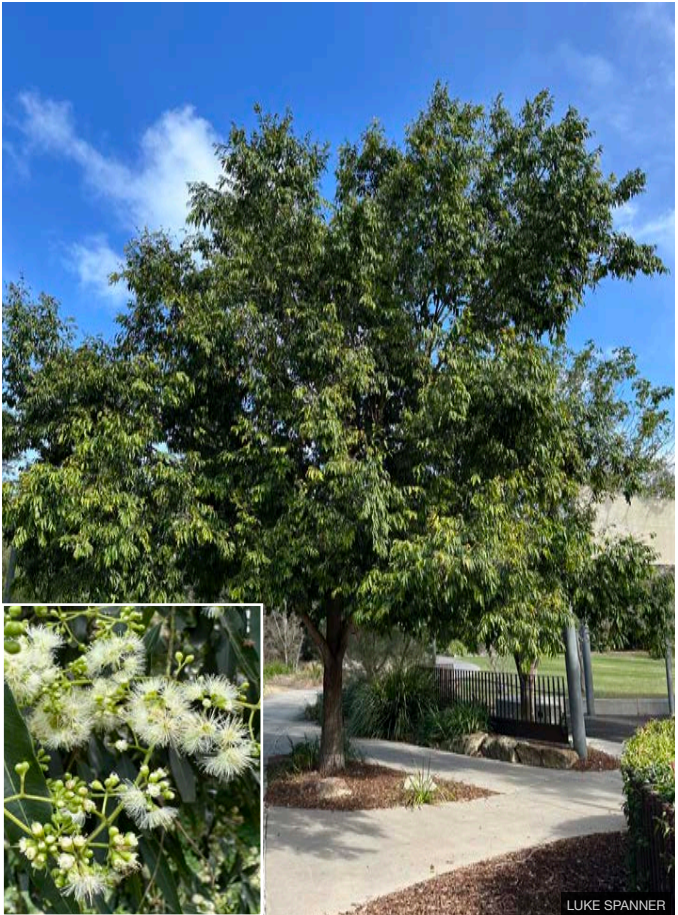


Description

With its neat canopy and glossy leaves, Water Gum is often chosen for streets, riversides, and parks. In cultivation it usually reaches 10 to 15 metres in height with a spread of 5 to 8 metres, developing a rounded crown that provides effective shade. The bark is smooth and grey when young and becomes more textured as the tree ages. It grows well in full sun or partial shade and suits many soil types, from rich loams to heavier clays. It also tolerates damp conditions, making it a good option for planting beside creeks and waterways.

In its natural range, Water Gum grows from Queensland through coastal New South Wales and into Victoria, and also occurs in New Guinea. Flowering takes place from late spring through summer, when clusters of small creamy to yellow flowers appear. These attract bees, butterflies, and nectar-feeding birds. Water Gum is tough, neat, and attractive, which makes it easy to grow and a safe choice for landscaping. There are also several cultivars available commercially.

Waterhousea floribunda (*Syzygium floribundum*)

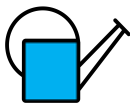


LUKE SPANNER

Weeping Lilly Pilly



15 metres



Lots



White flowers in
summer



Weeping form

Description

Weeping Lilly Pilly is a weeping evergreen that works well as a screen, feature tree, or street tree particularly in wetter sites. In cultivation it typically grows 8 to 15 metres tall and around 5 to 10 metres wide, although it can grow taller and wider in good conditions. It has lush rippled leaves and a smooth bark that becomes flaky with age. It grows well in full sun to part shade and prefers moist soils. Though not suited to very cold climates, it handles light frost, and brief dry periods, and can require ongoing maintenance once established.

Natural populations range from central eastern Queensland near Mackay down to northern New South Wales, where it occurs near creeks in rainforests. It produces clusters of white, fluffy flowers in summer followed by round, green fruit that ripen into a beautiful pink-red colour. The fruit is popular with birds, while the dense foliage offers great shade.

Xanthostemon chrysanthus

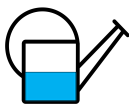


CATHERINE PICKERING

Golden Penda



10-15 metres



Moderate



Yellows flowers
summer to autumn



Round form

Description

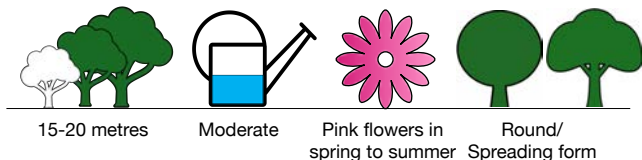
Golden Penda has a dense green canopy and spectacular yellow clusters of flowers. In cultivation it generally grows 10 to 15 metres tall with a spread of 5 to 8 metres, although it can grow taller. It develops a rounded crown with glossy dark leaves and smooth grey bark. This species grows best in full sun to partial shade and prefers well-drained, fertile soils. It performs reliably in warm, frost-free climates and benefits from extra water during dry periods, but can be damaged by whipper snippers, developing epicormic growth requiring pruning.

It occurs naturally in northeastern Queensland from Townsville through to Cape York Peninsula, growing along rainforest creeks and in open forests. Flowering occurs from summer into autumn, when masses of bright yellow blooms cover the canopy and provide abundant nectar for birds, bees, and butterflies. Woody capsules follow. Golden Penda is widely planted for its colour, strong adaptability, making it a popular choice in streets, parks and gardens in South East Queensland. There are also several cultivars available commercially.

Brachychiton discolor



Lacebark Tree



Description

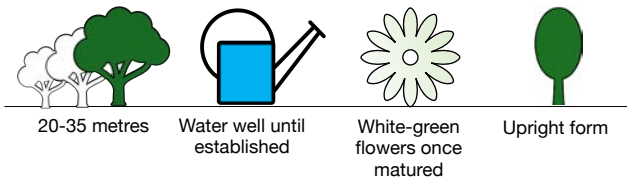
Lacebark Tree is a larger deciduous tree admired for its wide and spreading canopy, as well as showy pink flowers. In cultivation it generally grows 15 to 20 metres tall with a spread of around 10 metres, but in the wild can reach 30 metres tall. The species grows best in full sun to part shade and grows well in a range of well-drained soils. It is slow growing with a compact root system, making it suitable for streets, near infrastructure such as swimming pools, or even in large containers.

In Queensland it is found from the Mackay region through Gympie, and into New South Wales as far south as the Hunter region. Flowering occurs in late spring and summer, when after dropping all of its leaves, it produces clusters of pink blooms that attract nectar-feeding birds and insects. These are followed by large seedpods which have irritating hairs. The Lacebark Tree is best suited to larger gardens, parks, and streets where its size and colour can be appreciated.

Elaeocarpus grandis



CATHERINE PICKERING



Description

Blue Quandong is a large fast-growing rainforest tree that provides shade in streetscapes and public plantings. In cultivation it often reaches 20 to 35 metres in height with a crown spreading around 10 metres across, while in natural rainforest it can grow even larger. The tree has a tall straight trunk with large buttress style roots. The glossy leaves create a dense canopy, with new growth turning red. It grows best in moist, fertile soils and can handle full shade to partial sun. Once established it is hardy in large open spaces but has shallow roots and its seed can be a trip hazard.

This species occurs in tropical and subtropical rainforests of Queensland, from Torres Strait to northern New South Wales. Small white-green frilly flowers appear once the tree matures, followed by blue fruits. These fruits are eaten by cassowaries, fruit doves, flying foxes, and other wildlife, making the tree important for an array of animals. Blue Quandong is an excellent choice but only for larger sites due to its large size and buttress roots.

Gmelina leichhardtii



CATHERINE PICKERING

White Beech



15-25 metres



Moderate



Cream to purple
flowers in spring
to summer



Upright form

Description

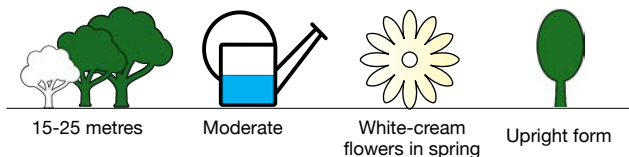
White Beech is a large semi-deciduous tree with a broad crown, often planted as a feature tree in parks and larger gardens. In cultivation it typically reaches 15 to 25 metres, while in rainforest it can exceed 30 metres. The foliage is bright green with a soft pink flush of new growth, while leaves are shed in spring before new shoots appear. This hardy species grows best in full sun to partial shade on deep, fertile, well-drained soils. It is moderately fast growing, low maintenance, making it useful for urban plantings and bushland restoration.

In Queensland it occurs along the coast, ranging into New South Wales as far as the Illawarra region. Flowering occurs in spring and summer with clusters of cream to purple blooms, followed by clusters of purple fruit. The flowers attract a variety of pollinators, while the broad canopy provides habitat for birds. White Beech is an important tree for urban landscaping and ecological restoration. This large tree is in the same family as mint, sage and lavender.

Flindersia australis



LUKE SPANNER



Description

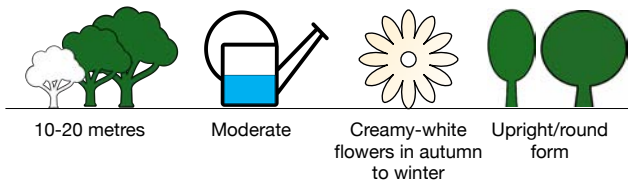
Crow's Ash is a medium-large tree that has a straight trunk and a dense crown of glossy leaves. In cultivation it usually grows 15 to 25 metres tall to 10 metres wide, though in the wild it grows to 40 metres in height. This species grows best in full sun to partial shade and does well on a range of soils, including heavier clays. Once established it tolerates drought, occasional frost, and even recovers well after fire, making it a hardy and low maintenance tree for large sites on streets and in parks.

In Queensland it occurs in drier and subtropical rainforests from coastal areas inland, extending into New South Wales. Flowering is in spring with bunches of small, scented white-creamy flowers that attract bees, butterflies, and other insects. These are followed by woody seed capsules covered in short spines that split open into a star shape when mature. The canopy also offers valuable shade and shelter for wildlife.

Flindersia bennettii



LUKE SPANNER



Description

Bennett's Ash is a large rainforest tree with a lovely, broad canopy and glossy green leaves. In cultivation it typically reaches heights of 10 to 20 metres, though it can grow up to 40 metres in rainforests. This tree is slow-growing at first but gains speed quickly once established. It performs best in full sun or light shade and grows well on many soil types.

In Queensland it is found from subtropical rainforests near Bundaberg through to northern New South Wales. Flowering is mainly in autumn and winter when terminal clusters of cream-coloured flowers are produced. These nectar-rich flowers attract bees, butterflies, and other small pollinators. Its durable timber was used in flooring, cabinetmaking, and boat building, but it is now rarer and protected in the wild. Bennett's Ash makes an excellent feature tree for parks, larger gardens, or avenues due to its strong, straight form and glossy foliage.

Melaleuca leucadendra



CATHERINE PICKERING

Weeping Paperbark



20-25 metres



Moderate



Creamy flowers
most of the year



Weeping form

Description

Weeping Paperbark is a tall evergreen often used in streetscapes, parks, and in waterlogged areas such as swales. In cultivation it can reach 20 to 25 metres with a spread of 10 or more metres and has a cascading form. It grows best in full sun and tolerates a wide range of soils, including waterlogged soils, and is low maintenance once established. Its most distinctive feature is the thick, pale papery bark that peels in layers and weeping form.

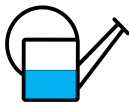
This species is naturally found in northern Queensland and across northern Australia, as well as New Guinea and parts of Indonesia. It flowers for much of the year, producing long creamy to greenish-white flowering spikes rich in nectar that attracts birds, bats, and insects. Small woody capsules follow along the branches. As a result of its hardness, attractive form and tolerance to wet soils, it is a popular choice for parks, streets and larger gardens.

Toona ciliata





20-30 metres



Moderate



White to cream
flowers in
summer



Upright form

Description

Red Cedar is a tall deciduous tree with a large spreading crown. In cultivation it typically grows 20 to 30 metres tall with a canopy spread of 8 to 12 metres, while in rainforest it can exceed 40 metres. The trunk is straight and fissured and has bright green leaves that turn yellow before dropping in winter. It grows best in full sun to partial shade on deep, fertile, well drained soils, and grows well in warm, humid climates. Once established it is hardy and fast growing, making it suitable for large parks and wide street verges.

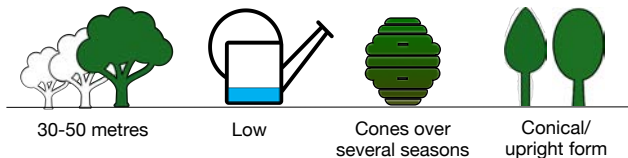
In Queensland it grows along coastal rainforests, extending south into New South Wales and north into parts of Asia and the Pacific. Small white to cream flowers are produced in summer and are lightly scented. The tree provides food and habitat for birds, insects, and other wildlife. Red Cedar was a significant timber tree valued for its rich colour and ease of working, resulting in over harvesting from the wild. It is a striking and functional tree for large urban landscapes.

Agathis robusta



CATHERINE PICKERING, LUKE SPANNER

Queensland Kauri Pine



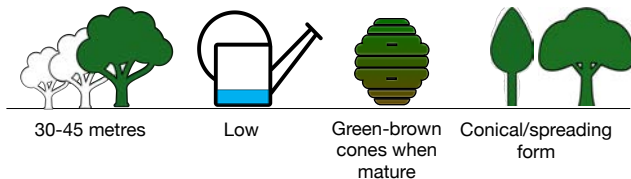
Description

Queensland Kauri Pine is a tall and stately evergreen conifer in streetscapes and parks. In cultivation it typically grows 30 to 50 metres tall with a spread of 8 to 15 metres. It has a straight trunk with smooth bark and a dense canopy of glossy green foliage. The leaves are leathery and arranged in opposite pairs, giving the tree a symmetrical appearance. This species grows best in full sun to light shade and prefers deep, fertile well-drained soils. It is suited to warm, humid areas but once established it can tolerate dry periods, making it a low maintenance option.

In Queensland it occurs around K'gari (Fraser) Island and Maryborough in the south, Atherton Tablelands in the north and also in New Guinea. These iconic attractive trees produce large rounded cones that take several seasons to mature, providing food for parrots such as sulphur-crested cockatoos. The timber was very popular leading to over-harvesting, with only small populations in the wild.

Araucaria cunninghamii





Description

Hoop Pine is a tall, long lived conifer suited to large streetscapes, avenues, and parks. In cultivation it typically reaches 30 to 45 metres tall with a narrow, conical crown spreading about 5 to 15 metres. The trunk is straight with bark that forms hoop like rings. It grows best in full sun or partial shade on fertile, well drained soils. Once established it tolerates dry periods and grows well in a range of climates.

In Queensland it occurs naturally in subtropical and drier rainforests along the eastern ranges and coastal districts, and extends into northern New South Wales and New Guinea. Mature trees produce separate male and female cones that release seeds which are eaten by birds. Hoop Pine is also a significant Australian timber species, valued for construction and furniture. Its height, straight form, and durability make it a popular choice as an icon tree in larger settings.

Ficus macrophylla



CATHERINE PICKERING, LUKE SPANNER

Moreton Bay Fig



15-35 metres



Moderate



Fruit forming in
summer



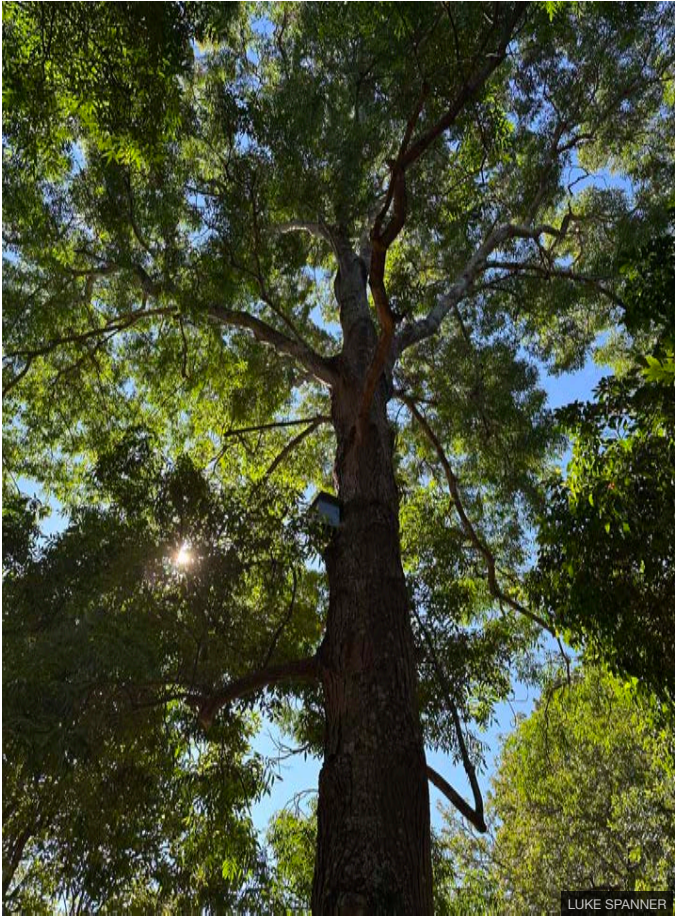
Spreading form

Description

Moreton Bay Fig is a massive evergreen with a broad canopy and large root system. In cultivation it typically grows 15 to 35 metres tall with similar width, sometimes reaching 60 metres under ideal rainforest conditions. The trunk is massive and features prominent buttresses, while aerial roots may grow down from the branches. This species thrives in full sun or light shade and adapts to a wide range of well-drained soils, providing generous shade once established.

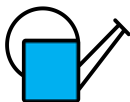
This species is native to eastern Australia, in coastal rainforests from central Queensland to southern New South Wales and Lord Howe Island. Flowering occurs throughout the year, with fruit forming mainly in summer. The fruit is popular with many animals, especially fig-eating birds and bats. The tree's massive size makes it more suitable for parks or roundabouts with plenty of room rather than street verges, but wherever it is grown, the invasive roots means that it must be planted away from pipes, paths and other infrastructure.

Flindersia xanthoxyla





25-40 metres



Lots



Yellow flowers
through summer



Upright form

Description

Yellow Wood is a large rainforest tree with a thick trunk and dense canopy. In cultivation it can reach 25 to 40 metres tall with a broad crown spreading around 12 metres. The bark is grey to brown, and the leaves are bright green above and pale underneath. This species grows best in full sun to part shade in fertile, well drained soils with lots of water. Once established it tolerates warm, humid conditions and provides a reliable, low maintenance option in large areas in parks and streets.

In Queensland it grows naturally in the south east, around Gympie, extending into northern New South Wales. Flowering in summer it produces small yellow blooms at the ends of branches. These are followed by seed capsules that split into a star shape when mature. Yellow Wood has long been valued for its timber for flooring and furniture. Its height and shade make it a great choice for large urban settings.

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