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WILDFLOWERS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA FOR YOUR GARDEN

SOME SMALL SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EUCALYPTS

by I. G. Holliday

South Australia possesses large tracts of land where the small tree or mallee eucalypt is the dominant tree. Many of these species extend east, north or west to other states, but there are some which are exclusively ours.

This article describes a number of these smaller South Australian eucalypts. Two of these, *E. gillii* and *E. youngiana*, extend across the border into New South Wales and West Australia respectively, but not the others.

E. brachycalyx. "Gilja" is native only to Eyre Peninsula, the Flinders Range and its eastern plains.

It is a small, bushy mallee to 20 ft. high with narrow, shining leaves and smooth white bark on all limbs but the base of the main trunks where the bark is rough and dark grey in colour. Distinguishing features are the rusty red, striated and hemispherical, operculums and the enclosed or slightly exerted valves on the small, conical fruiting capsules. Flowering occurs in spring and summer when the small white or cream flowers appear in handsome masses. "Gilja" is an easily grown species, suited to coastal planting as well as inland where rainfall is 10"-25" annually.

E. brachycalyx var. *chindoo*, The "Chindoo Mallee", is similar, its differences being the narrow tips of the fruiting valves which are prominently exerted and generally slightly smaller fruits and narrower leaves. It is only known to occur on Eyre Peninsula, South Australia.

E. cladocalyx nana—"Bushy Sugar Gum". Although well known throughout temperate Australia due to its adaptability for farm planting, the "Sugar Gum", *E. cladocalyx*, surprisingly is not a common tree under natural conditions. Here it is indigenous to only 3 areas of South Australia, in the Flinders Range, on Kangaroo Is. and Marble Ranges of Eyre Peninsula.

The Eyre Peninsula form is a much smaller and more compact tree, perhaps better suited as a farm shelter tree than the upright, taller form. It is this form which is known as *E. cladocalyx nana*, the "Bushy Sugar Gum". "Bushy Sugar Gum" is usually a single-stemmed, low, but spreading tree to 25 ft. high with very glossy, green leaves and shiny bronze new growth. Bark is smooth in cream, grey and orange colouring. The creamy-yellow flowers occur in summer. This is a very hardy tree suited to most soils.

A distinctive feature of the "Sugar Gums" is its juvenile leaves which are virtually circular on bright red stems.

E. cosmophylla—"Cup Gum". Although still found in bushland in the Mt. Lofty Range near Adelaide and also in poorly drained areas of Kangaroo Island, the "Cup Gum" could now almost be listed as a rare species, particularly as it is seldom cultivated. It is usually a small tree or shrub (near the sea) but can reach 50 ft. under favourable conditions. It has a dense, spreading crown, rather large, broad, dull green leaves and smooth, pale grey, or pinkish bark. The feature of the "Cup Gum" is its large cream flowers which are conspicuous in winter months. Fruits are large and cup-shaped on very short stalks "Cup Gum" favours the poorer soils of quartzite origin but where rainfall is 30" or more annually. Little is known of it as a cultivated tree.

(To be continued in the next issue)

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE—It is the usual practice to include on this page a guide to the articles in the issue but, when the issue was finalised it was found that such a huge array of articles have been mentioned that it was impracticable. The issue has been prepared by South Australian readers on South Australian wildflowers and they have done a marvellous job of it. The wildflowers described will grow in other States and the issue is of wide application. For this reason Ivan Holliday's article has been thrust in at the last minute and will have to be continued next issue. For which, I hope he and the real editor of this issue Lance Howland, will forgive me.—Editor.

