

EUCALYPTUS STUDY GROUP

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants



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USING EUCALYPTS IN THE GARDEN



The photos here of the Argyle Apple (*E. cinerea*) show how it can be grown either as a tree (above) or as a low growing hedge/ground cover (below)

We usually think of eucalypts as trees that provide shelter and shade in the garden but are rather spectacular overall.

There are, however, many eucalypts that can provide outstanding ornamental value in the garden either for their foliage, flowers or both. The Mallee eucalypts are particularly well suited to garden situations. They are defined by the

fact that they produce multiple trunks. This means that they can effectively be grown as shrubs in the garden. Species such as *E. macrocarpa* with its spectacular 10cm flowers can also be grown in this way. A regular trim after flowering is the best way to prune such species.



E. macrocarpa, the Rose of the West is an outstanding ornamental mallee for drier climates.

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E. macrandra (above & below) is another outstanding mallee species suitable for garden cultivation.

Change of leadership

This is my last newsletter. After several years of trying to cope with personal trauma and still carry on the leadership of the Eucalyptus Study Group I have bowed to

the inevitable and stepped down. As of this month Tam Kendall of Victoria is the new leader (see details on back page). I apologise to you all for my poor performance as leader and hope that you will renew your memberships and give Tam your full support. Please write to her as soon

as possible if you wish to renew your membership and she will let you know of where you are up to with your membership.

Please give Tam your support as I will be in order to get the group functioning once again.



FEATURE EUCALYPT CORAL GUM (*EUCALYPTUS TORQUATA*)



The Coral Gum (*E. torquata*) derives its common name from the intricate and ornate flower buds and gumnuts that are delicately sculpted into their corallike appearance.

This is a Western Australian goldfields species that can be found in the wild near Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. It has been widely planted in WA and inland areas in other

states as a street tree.

It also Apart from the beautiful buds and gumnuts it has spectacular red flowers that are produced in absolute profusion in spring. It is also an excellent source of honey and has been successfully cultivated in California.

This species forms spectacular hybrids with the stunning Lemon Flowered Gum (*E. woodwardii*)



with the resulting plants being given the name 'Torwood', derived from a combination of the species names of the 2 parents.

The only major drawback of the Coral Gum is its unsuitability for the coastal areas of eastern Australia where it seems to be unable to adapt to the higher humidity levels which tend to cause it to succumb to a variety of fungal dis-

Gahan Gilfedder from Barkers Vale in NSW grows eucalyptus suitable for hardy conditions;

We have two selections of *E. (Corymbia) ficifolia* (Wildfire and a selection of Merv Hodge) and a local selection of *ptychocarpa*

Kevin Penny from Stratford in Victoria reports:

I have about 160 species growing on my ten acres. QLD species do better than WA species due to the humidity. One favorite I got from Bill Cane before he dies. It is *E. saligna* X *E. crenulata*. I have a few of these crosses favoring either parent. One has the form of *crenulata*, the leaf colour of *saligna* and the foliage gives off a distinctive peach odor, leaves are shaped more like *crenulata* but are much larger. Naturally occurring on my block are *E. pyroriana*, *E. viminalis*, *E. tereticornis*, *E. ovata* and *E. melliodora*.

Hugh Seeds from York in Western Australia: I have been supplying seedlings of tall eucalyptus for farmers for shelter and salt control, but recently I have become concerned to get understories planted for the sake of the health of the tall trees. So now I grow many hakeas, wattles and melucas and clothamnsu and callistemon phoenicius...for the past twelve years I have been working t getting the gardening public interested in native trees and shrubs. Dwarf Eucalyptus ...not only do many mallees have fine flowers, but with their silvery foliage they provide contrast among the generally green foliage of other shrubs. My favorites area: *albida*, *crucis*, *macrocarpa*, *rhodantha*, *orbifolia*. *formanii* is worth growing for its delicate

foliage.

Also, to keep *E. albida* true to its name, cut back every 2 years.



Eucalyptus curtisii, the Plunkett Mallee (above & below) is a superb smaller growing eucalypt.



Leigh Murray's Eucalypt Garden

The first two trees I chose to plant were *E. leucoxylon megalocarpa* and *E. torquata*. Thinking that I'd only have room to plant two trees, and having the aim of attracting the most birds I could into what is a small island of natives in a desert of exotic plants, I really stewed over my selection. (I've since found spots for many more trees, but that's another story.) I settled on *E. leucoxylon megalocarpa* as my first eucalypt because this is the species regarded as the outstanding bird-attractor. It has a long flowering season (in autumn and winter), nectar-rich flowers, fine insectivorous foliage, and seeds that are popular with parrots. To complement it, I chose *E. torquata* because it also has nectar-rich flowers that birds adore but its long-flowering season is mainly over summer. Both eucs are small trees (usually about 5 metres) which is an ideal size for a suburban-sized block of land. *E. leucoxylon* has another very desirable attribute for our situation: it is wind-resistant.

The *E. leucoxylon megalocarpa* is now, two years after planting from a 150mm pot (I couldn't get tubestock), almost 3 metres tall and growing rapidly. It is a beauty: a handsome small tree. At the end of its first winter it presented us with two gorgeous cerise flowers, just enough flowers to show us their colour (and what a delightful surprise it was when

Eucalyptus leuhmanii in Leigh



we saw them). In its second winter it had many more flowers, which certainly attracted the wattlebirds; they spent hours each day in the tree, sipping from flower after flower.

Two *E. torquata* were planted 18

months ago, in quite different positions (one exposed to southerlies and the other to salt-laden nor'easters, although both happen to be somewhat sheltered at this stage by large grevilleas). The *torquatas* are single trunked trees with small dense crowns of attractive greyish foliage. They are now rapidly approaching the 2 metre mark, and both have buds already (their flowers are usually pink).

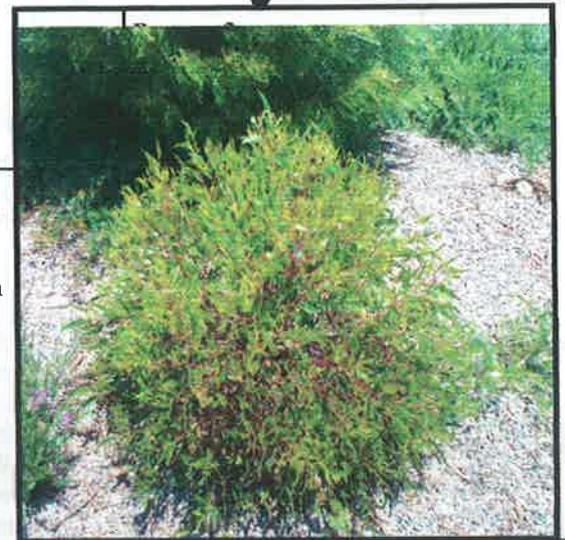
Like the *torquatas*, our three *E. leptophylla* already have buds – but the *leptophyllas* have quite a different habit. They are delightfully delicate, small shrubs of about half a metre high and wide, with fine, almost weeping foliage. Their habit is especially suited to coping with strong winds (we've found that plants with weeping foliage just "go with the flow" and tend not to snap).

In 15 months, two *Eucalyptus lehmannii* have grown into wonderful big ball-shaped dense shrubs of about 1.5m tall – see picture. Their shape is most unusual and striking, and their foliage is bright green. They are making quite a statement. We're looking forward to their large greenish-yellow flowers (reputed to be good bird-attractors); there are no buds yet.

Another euc making a statement is *E. tetraptera*, with huge leathery leaves and an open habit. These trees are very trainable – they can even be espaliered, making them suitable for narrow areas. Ours is about a metre tall now.

Four *E. nutans* are about half a metre tall, forming fairly open shrubs (I should have tip-pruned them more – I'm getting stuck in now), as is a single *E. formanii*. A *E. preissiana*, on the other hand, has taken a ground-hugging attitude and could easily be mistaken for a rather straggly ground cover (a younger plant is still upright).

Other eucs planted more than a year ago and growing well so far at our seaside site include *E. diversifolia*, *E. platypus*, and *E. pyriformis* (all bushy), *E. cyanophylla* (very straggly), *E. websteriana* (fairly open), and *E. lansdowneana* and *E. calycogona* (small trees, almost a metre high).



***E. nutans* in Leigh Murray's garden**

Not doing as well is *E. kruseana*. It is just hanging in there, but it was in a parlous state when it was planted (its last hope for survival). I tried it in Queanbeyan first, and it took such an instant dislike that I put it back in a pot for a while before planting it at Turoos. Plantings this year (a few months ago) include *E. caesia*, *E. erythronema*, *E. dielsii*, *E. macrandra* and *E. lansdowneana ssp. albopurpurea*. It is too early to report on them except to say they look happy and they are all growing.

I have had two major misfortunes: *E. olsenii* and *E. albida*. The *E. olsenii*, a rare species (to about 8m) from the high country just inland of our coastal site, grew at a breathtaking pace for several months. It was over a metre high when disaster struck. Something burnt most of the foliage. I think it was either dog urine (which later killed a *E. tetraptera* and a *E. lansdowneana* planted in the same area), or the liquid fertilising regime (weak Maxicrop or Seasol) I was using at the time (I've since abandoned this for most plants). We were shocked by the sudden loss of our *E. olsenii*. Being used to gardening on poor shaley soil in the Canberra area (where everything takes absolutely ages to grow), we'd been amazed at the growth rate of the *E. olsenii*; it was even outstripping the speedy growth of the *E. leucoxylon*. It was a major loss, and we grieved. I have just planted another *E. olsenii*, protected against passing dogs by shadecloth and a nurse shrub...

The second major misfortune can be indirectly blamed on a white-tailed spider: the spider bit me and I was so sick that for weeks I wasn't able to care for any plants, including my beautiful *E. albida*. Planted for only 5 months, it

EUCALYPTUS ALL OVER THE WORLD

From Florida in the United States, Richard Blauman writes:

I live in central Florida... Australian trees are almost impossible to find in nurseries... totally different to California where Eucalyptus are the dominant trees. Species I grow successfully are C. citriodora, maculata, torelliana, E. botryoides, calmandulensis, cosmophylla, grandis, haemostoma, kitsoniana, maidenii, megacarpa, punctata, robusta, rudis, saligna, tereticornis, viminalis and A floribunda... I am looking for Eucalyptus suitable form my climate..hot wet summers (90 degree days for 6 months with 75 degrees nights) and mild dry winters...rain is 40 to 50" per year with the summer months averaging 10" each. Elevation is 50 feet above sea level. Drainage is poor off and on during the rainy season due to a clay subsoil but the rest of the year the soil is fine and dries out...

(Any suggestion write to:

Richard Blauman

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Florida 33571 USA

Michael Iradi writes from his pent-house in New York:

First, let me tell you that Australian natives are virtually unknown in the USA, with the exception of a hand full ..I am interested in the cold tolerant plants of the Snowy Mountains and ACT area as well as Tasmania. Experiments in the USA with citrus have shown that sub tropicals grafted onto cold hardy root stock enable the tree to survive the cold. Exactly why this is not clear.

The few photographs of Eucalyptus flowers I have seen which can survive winter temperatures(which can dip to -10 and—15 degrees C).



This selection of the Tasmanian Blue Gum was apparently made in California. It is known as *E. globulus* 'Compacta'. It retains its juvenile foliage and grows to a height of several metres unlike the usual Blue Gum which can grow to more than 50 metres.

Kay tells a travellers tale seed collecting all over Australia...

Kaye Bartlett from "Winpara" in Jervois South Australia has a history of eucalyptus growing we can only stand back and admire.....

When I married 36 years ago the first thing was to plant trees...people couldn't work out why we were planting back trees that would not give us any fruit. We started travelling around Australia in 1967 and collecting seed was a natural instinct. We travelled to Darwin, down the Qld coast...then via the centre... ..In July last year we drove up the centre, visiting Old Andado station, the Aca-cia puece reserve...the Tanami track, Broome and into the Pilbara area visiting a few very beautiful gorges off Marble bar...from the Pilbara we meandered across the state via dire tracks coming out near Shark Bay than across to Cue down to Wongan Hills and home. Wild flowers in some of this country rivalling any cottage garden.

Today there would have to be at least between 400 and 500 different Eucalyptus on the property. In Hakea species there are 50 to 60. Most are of the Calothammus but Eremophilas are not happy with our sandy soli, most seem to prefer clay in the soil. Most of the eucalyptus are from drier areas especially the inland areas of WA, which grow exceptionally well here. A lot of these I have only just identified when Brooker and Kleinig book on Eucalyptus came out There are still many on the place that I have not put names to.

(Editors note: Kaye you are a cham-

The pictures on this page feature eucalypt cultivars that have been selected overseas.



This Californian selection (in the photos left and right) of *E. pulverulenta*, Silver leaved mountain gum is known as 'Baby Blue'. It is very popular as a cut foliage but also makes an outstanding landscape plant as well.



Member's letters

The following is correspondence from ESG member Lorraine Haig. We live in Richmond, Tasmania which is 25 k north east of Hobart and we have a lower rainfall than Hobart. In fact it is quite dry here and I need to do a lot of supplementary watering to get young plants to survive and indeed to get mature plants to flower. Here are the rainfall figures since last January. J-72, F-35, M-20, A-6, Ma-22, Ju-11, Jl-60, A-50, S-23 O-47, N-35, D-23. I have only been keeping rainfall figures for that time but the last three years have been similar. Around 350 to 400mil a year. Our winters are generally wetter than our summers. We are situated on a hill and are subjected to all winds which can be gale force, especially at this time of year. Our garden faces west and is quite steep. Our house is built on a flat piece of ground at the top of our 1/2 acre block. There is a strip of flat land at the bottom of our block where a small ephemeral creek will run after heavy rain. This has only happened twice in the five and a half years we have been here. We do not have any top soil as the farmer who owned the land originally, sold it before selling the land for subdivision. We are left with red clay which I am building up by adding gypsum and sand and raising the beds about 30cm. There are no drainage problems even though we are on clay due to the steepness of our block. Keeping water in the soil is our biggest problem. Our low winter temperatures hover around 0 degrees sometimes reaching -2 or -3, but as we are near to the sea we do not go much lower than this. We would have around 10 moderate frosts a year when the temperature drops to -3degrees but these only affect parts of the garden due to the tree canopy. Winter highs range from about 10 to 14, occasionally lower. Our summer temperatures are generally around the high 20s occasionally in to the 30s.

Editor's note: Thank you to all the members who have written me letters full of interesting information. We would love to receive more member's letters in similar vein as these shared experiences is what the Study Group is all about.

Parts of the garden are about 15 years old and include many Eucalypts and Acacias planted for wind protection. The older Eucalypts in our garden that I can name are as follows;

E. kitsoniana - grows well with occasional inundation

E. preissiana - in raised bed of gravelly soil, no extra water. Pour specimen, very little growth, last flowered 4years ago. 2mtrs high and spindly I have more growing now but I find them difficult to keep alive

E.caesia - Grows in raised area and flowered for the first time this year. Has extra water supplied due to micro sprays which I am gradually installing to all my garden areas. Only 1.5mtrs high.

E.risdonii - Grows well here, almost in its natural habitat.

E. morrisbyi - Growing well, 3 years old and has yet to flower.

E.cordata - Another which does well without any help.

E. stoateii - Very small and is prostrate. Growing in a raised area of red sand. Flowers yearly but flowers never open properly. Extra water given.

E.lansdowneana - In raised beds Flowers twice a year. Deep, dark red flowers, extra water given.3-4mtrs high.

E.calycogona - flowered last year for first time. In amongst other trees Not a lot of space. Has extra water.

E. dielsii - Had two growing together Three trunks each. Wind has removed one tree and reduced the other to two trunks. 5-6mtrs flowers well each year.

E. erythrocorys - In raised bed next to house. Faces north and flowers every second year.

E. kruseana - In raised bed, no extra water. Has a lot of die back and is very spindly 2mtrs high It flowers each year. I have taken seeds and am at present growing some seedlings on to plant in a better area.

E. globulus - Growing well . Probably about 10-12mtrs.

E. globulus (subsp I am unsure of) Unfortunately it grows 3mtrs from the corner of the house It is multi-stemmed and is growing well. We are removing the stems gradually due to its close proximity to the house.

E. sideroxylon - multi-stemmed and slow growing.

E. leucoxylon subsp leucoxylon- There are quite a few of these growing in groups in different areas. They all grow and flower well.

E. lehmannii - These are scattered around the place and all are doing well. I have raised more from seed and planted out. No

extra water given. flowers well.

E. urnigera - grows well , 4 years old.

E. vernicosa - In a moist area with added water. 3 years old.

E. forrestiana - 3 years old and about to flower.

I have a number of other older Eucalypts which I haven't been able to name. I am also in the process of planting out, or have planted in the last 12 months, a number of other species which include E.grossa, E. tetraptera, E. nutans, E. pyriformis, E. torwood, E. tetragona, E.macrocarpa, E. stoatei.

ORIGINAL MEMBER

From Tony Cox:

I must be among the original members of the study group...when as a retired widower I developed my 4 acre property on the R iver Bremer at Ipswich into an Australian native arboretum of which 60 species had survived (it was black soil country) ...at Forest Place Retirement in the limits space available to my unit I was able to plant an "Eve eximia nana" which after a bout of celosia is now looking quite healthy (treated with Iron chelate).

FLOWERS

Ian and Sandy Mulcahy in Gilgandra write about growing Eucalyptus species for the cut flower market

We own 115 hectares of very light acid soil near Gilgandra NSW which is largely timbered with narrow leaf iron bark (E. crebra) and white cy press pine. Since 1993 we have been trying to establish a eucalypt plantation. We have tri-

alled over 30 species we now have about 3000 tress. Ian and Sandy have a fantastic collection of Western Australian mallee species.



E. woodwardii

Study Group information

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The fabulous red flowering gum (*Corymbia ficifolia*) is one of the most sought after of all the ornamental eucalypts. The author tracked this famous species down in its natural habitat near Albany in the south-western corner of Western Australia. As you may be able to make out from the bottom photo *ficifolia* was growing as a compact shrub on the roadside. This appeared to be a population of a mallee form of this spectacular plant. Normally it grows to a height of 15-25 metres.



Membership information

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Membership of the Eucalyptus study group Please supply the following information	
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Tam will contact you regarding your financial status in the group.	

Leigh Murray's Eucalypt Garden
(cont from page 3)

thriving. However, like a couple of grevilleas in the same area, it missed me when I was sick (well, the watering I provided), and promptly died. Very disappointing. Overall, there have been a few disappointments/losses, but apart from those our little eucs have grown surprisingly well.

One of the southern NSW coastal towns, Mogo, has recently had planted 5 or 6 *Euc. ficifolia* (I think) along the main street (part of the Princes Highway, en route to our holiday house at Tuross Head). These *ficifolias* have been flowering already, and they certainly make a beautiful statement (and sure beat the magnolias planted along the main street of the next town, Moruya). The *ficifolia* flowers are real show-stoppers. *Euc. ficifolia* is planted quite extensively by gardeners on the NSW South Coast (it seems to be just about the only euc sold widely there) and it does fairly well (not, I've heard, nearly as well as in its home state, but the trees do usually look wonderful when they're flowering, and interesting the rest of the time). The *ficifolias* do, however, usually grow much more slowly than has my spectacularly fast *Euc. leucoxylon*, and I doubt they