



# Trees of Williamstown Botanic Gardens

**Botanical Name:** *Eucalyptus globulus* subsp. *globulus*

**Common Name:** Tasmanian Blue Gum

**Origin:** Tasmania and Victoria



Tasmanian Blue Gum is large tree growing to 45m or more, and to 70m in the wild. Occurs as a forest tree in south-east Tasmania, Bass Strait islands, and in the Otways and Wilsons Promontory in southern Victoria.

The tree produces distinctive waxy-white to grey-green juvenile leaves which occur opposite and without stalks. These leaves are followed by large lanceolate, sometimes sickle-shaped, dark glossy green leaves. The bark is smooth except near the base and of varying colour, normally grey, white and tan, more or less striped and is shed in long ribbons. The fruits are warty, often glaucous with a large cap. The flowers are solitary, with a flattened stalk and creamy white.

Blue Gum is a major timber tree and has been extensively planted in plantations in southern Australia and Tasmania. The timber is strong and durable and has been used for a variety of purposes including railway sleepers, piles, paper making, oil and honey. The tree coppices well and has been used for fuel. The volatile oil content is relatively low but that hasn't prevented substantial oil harvesting from the species, particularly in Spain and Portugal. The oil is pale yellow in colour and is used in perfumery and in soap making.

Blue Gum was widely planted in the nineteenth century and once occurred in St Kilda

Road, Sturt Street, Ballarat, windbreaks and in many historic parks and gardens. It was favoured as a fast growing tree, and for its dark green foliage. Baron von Mueller promoted its planting in Victoria and overseas and he earned the name "Blue Gum Mueller". Blue Gum is well established overseas and occurs in Algeria, Brazil, France, India, Spain, Canary Islands, and Portugal.

In California it has become so well established that it has spread into areas of natural vegetation. *Eucalyptus globulus* 'Compacta' is a bushy short trunked tree which is thought to have originated in California.

Other subspecies are: *Eucalyptus globulus* subsp. *maidenii* (Maiden's Gum). Flowers in groups of 7. Occurs in Victoria and eastern New South Wales.

*Eucalyptus globulus* subsp. *pseudoglobulus* (Victorian Eurabbie). Flowers in groups of 3, buds and fruits stalked. Occurs in Victoria – East Gippsland, Otways, Avoca and Flinders Island.

*Eucalyptus globulus* subsp. *bicostata* (Eurabbie, Victorian Blue Gum). Flowers in groups of 3, buds and fruits stalkless. Occurs in north-eastern Victoria and southern New South Wales.