

SA Blue Gum

Eucalyptus leucoxylon

NAMING: leucoxylon is Greek for white wood. The name leucoxylon refers to the pale white wood of the tree and literally means white wood. The tree is also known as White Iron Bark or Yellow Gum. Folklore has it that the alternative name (White Ironbark) was given by timber-getters; Yellow Gum timber was not acceptable for railway sleepers, but if renamed White Ironbark it was acceptable.

DISTRIBUTION: They are widespread throughout South Australia including the Mt Lofty Ranges, Kangaroo Island, and parts of the Southern Flinders and lower South East.

HABITAT: They do best in the higher rainfall areas and on fertile soils.

DESCRIPTION: is a medium-sized tree from 10-30 metres high. It usually has a single trunk with smooth bark that sheds in strips. The bark is almost cream coloured with patches of grey. There can be an area of rough bark at the base, but the upper trunk and branches are smooth.



The **flowers** are usually seen in autumn and winter and may be white, cream, pink or red. The gumnuts are thick walled and round to pear-shaped. They have flat disk and can vary in size from 9-22 x 7-18 mm.



The common name, Blue Gum, refers to the juvenile **leaves** that are light bluish-green colour. They are round or oval shaped. The adult leaves, however, are lance-shaped to about 200 mm long. They are mid to dark or olive green. Their **wood**, when freshly exposed, is a bright red, almost blood-coloured. This is due to natural antibiotic chemicals that when combined with air, provide both resistance to water and protect the trees against termites and diseases.

TRADITIONAL USE:

ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE:

INTERESTING FACTS: The River Red and Blue Gums are very similar in appearance. However, their flowers and gumnuts differ – Red Gums have creamy-white flowers, SA Blue Gums can have red, pink or cream flowers. Red Gums have rather small clumps of gumnuts and SA Blue Gums have larger gumnuts (right). Blue Gums are regularly planted for windbreaks, shade, and honey production and are often seen as garden and street trees.