

Eucalypts (Gum trees) are the most obvious component and the easiest to identify of all Australian vegetation. Eucalypts are found all over Australia and are firmly entrenched in Australian culture by way of historical reference from the early pioneer days to present times. The humble gum tree is not only an important forest and urban resource in Australia but throughout the world with many countries using Eucalypts for both Landscape and commercial purposes. Eucalypts come in varied shapes and sizes from small mallae or alpine trees to the Mountain Ash and Flooded Gum.

The use of Eucalypts in the urban Garden

Prior to selecting any tree or trees including Eucalypts for an urban garden or landscape plan, a number of issues must first be considered.

The species type will generally be determined by one, or a combination of the following factors:-

- Available planting space ie proximity to dwellings, built structures etc
- Presence and position of utilities ie sewerage pipes, electrical wires.
- Soil Type and profile ie depth of clay or rock shelf.
- Sites exposure/vulnerability to wind
- Site drainage ie wet or dry area.
- Neighbouring properties must also be considered with regard to the above.

Note: Council's Tree Management Permit records show that approximately 30% of applications submitted to Council requesting full removal or pruning of trees involve Eucalypts.

The majority of Eucalypts commonly used in amenity horticulture (in the Illawarra region) generally exhibit very quick growth rates. Many people have been caught-out by consciously, incorrectly siting a tree or trees with the view that the tree/s will take many years to impact on the infrastructure of the area and when it does it won't be their problem. In reality this does not happen as damage can occur very quickly. This situation is not only emotionally distressing (in the instance of commemorative planting's) but can also be a very expensive exercise

The Incorporation of Remnant Eucalypts into the Urban Landscape

Often remnant Eucalypts are incorporated into the design of developments including sub divisions and cluster housing. There are tremendous advantages in retaining these established trees:-

- Ready made established landscape with aesthetic and amenity benefits attached ie shade, Visual enhancement of the area etc
- Established nesting/perching, and food sites for Fauna
- Established linkages to vegetation corridors and mature age species capable of reproduction preserving the generic characteristics of the species.
- Soil and land stability

Disclaimers

This information was believed to be correct at the date of its publication.

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