

Coral Gum *Eucalyptus torquata*



NATIVE PLANT NOTES

Description

Eucalyptus torquata is an attractive small shade tree growing to 6–8 m, with a single trunk and spread of some 5 m. Its rough greyish bark contrasts pleasantly with the blue-green pendulous foliage, but its main features are the unusually-shaped red buds and abundance of blossom. It may flower while still a very young tree.

Flowers

As the common name implies, the profuse flowers are reddish-pink or coral coloured and hang decoratively on reddish stems. The clusters of five to seven flowers, each about 3 cm across, occur over a long period from August to December. The buds are attractive and prominently ribbed with an extended beak-like cap. The flowers produce abundant nectar and pollen providing a good food source for wildlife and are relatively long-lasting as a cut flower.

Growing conditions

The Coral Gum thrives in most soil types but it is important that the site is free-draining and sunny. It is suitable for soils with underlying limestone but also tolerates slight acidity. *E. torquata* is best planted in the autumn and winter months.

Watering

Water well at the time of planting and monitor the soil moisture during the first winter and spring. Ensure the tree is given a deep watering twice a week in the first summer and into the following autumn until rains return. Once established it should only require supplementary watering during extended dry periods.

Pruning

This tree does not usually require formative pruning but can respond well to light pruning to retain shape.

Fertiliser

Apply slow-release native-blend 8–9 month fertiliser at time of planting.

Pests and diseases

This species can be susceptible to scale.

Miscellaneous

The Latin word *torquatus* means 'adorned with a neck-chain or collar' and refers to the decorative ridge around the base of the strangely pointed operculum or bud cap.



Further Information

Gardening Advisory Service, a free service provided by Kings Park Volunteer Master Gardeners.
Phone: (08) 9480 3672 or Email: garden.advice@bgpa.wa.gov.au.

Pest and Diseases Information Service, Department of Agriculture and Food.
Freecall 1800 084 881 Email: info@agric.wa.gov.au or visit www.agric.wa.gov.au.