Coral Gum
*Eucalyptus torquata*

**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.

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**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.