

Trees Suitable for the Central Coast

Growing trees in your garden will add beauty and character. A good choice will give you a lifetime of enjoyment.



Figure 1: *Buckinghamia celsissima*

Trees are an important part of the visual landscape of your neighbourhood

- A wide variety of trees are available to suit every property size.
- Select carefully, as trees should be allowed to grow to their full potential without ugly lopping and trimming.
- Nurseries now stock a range of dwarf forms suitable for growing in small areas or containers.
- Rainforest trees are becoming popular in the garden because they grow smaller and more compact than the giants we see in the rainforest. They offer good shade, attractive flowers and fruits and colourful new growth. However, they do like the deeper, rich soils of the valleys for best results.
- Eucalypts are an essential part of the Australian scene. Unfortunately, changed growing conditions have unfairly earned them a doubtful reputation. A tree that has developed in a forest, and then is suddenly exposed by clearing, may be more susceptible to wind damage or branch failure. When clearing, retain trees in groups where possible.

Trees will provide

- shade & shelter for recreation,
- privacy screens and wind protection,
- part of the natural ecology that reduces the need for chemical control by attracting birds and other wildlife which feed on the unwanted pests,
- homes for wildlife- old trees that have developed hollows are extremely important for nesting birds and animals and should be kept if possible.

Site conditions

Gardeners who live on the sandstone ridge tops will have much different soil conditions from those on the slopes and in the valleys.

Ridgetop gardens

- These sandstone soils can be quite shallow, dry and open to strong winds.
- A well mulched garden with plenty of added compost will improve these soils.
- Lower growing species such as mallees, some hakeas and casuarinas will do best.
- Plants will benefit from being placed in groups, e.g. small trees with bushy shrubs.

Slopes and open forests

- Usually these soils are deeper and retain more moisture than the ridge tops and will support larger trees.
- Some wind protection may be needed.

Valleys and sheltered slopes

- Soils are moist, deeper and hold more nutrients.
- They are home to the larger eucalypts and rainforest trees.

Coastal areas

- Coastal areas are explained in Fact Sheet 4 titled Coastal Plants.

Points to consider before making your selection



- Soil - enough area is needed for the tree to develop a root system to support the tree of your choice.
- Roots - check the proximity to foundations, pathways and drainage systems. (See Fact Sheet No. 10)
- Size - consider the potential height of a tree and plant it at least that far away from any buildings e.g. a tree that grows to 10 metres needs to be planted 10-20 metres away from any building.
- Neighbours - roots and branches do not recognise man-made boundaries.
- Life span - some fast growing trees can have a fairly short life span.

- Mature size - Take care not to over plant your garden with young trees without considering their mature size.

Choosing a plant

- Choose a plant that is sturdy with a straight stem, a good colour and is not showing signs of being root bound in the pot.
- Smaller plants usually adapt to a new site better than more mature plants.
- State Forest Nurseries stock a large range of local species.
- It helps to note the type of trees growing in your area that are looking strong and healthy.

Soil preparation and planting

1. Good drainage is essential.
2. Clay soils can be improved with added compost or one of the commercial products that are available.
3. Sandy soils will need added compost (well-rotted) to retain the moisture.
4. Dig the hole at least 3 times the width of the pot.
5. Fill hole with water and allow to drain away. Slow draining means more treatment is necessary.
6. Before planting out, thoroughly wet the potted plant by placing it in a bucket of water until the air bubbles have stopped.
7. Finally, water the plant in well and mulch the surface keeping the stem of the plant clear to prevent collar rot.

Caring for your trees

1. A light pruning when young will help to develop a good shape.
2. Seasonal applications of an organic fertiliser will keep the tree healthy.
3. Keep the grass at least 1 metre away from the tree trunk to avoid grass cutter damage.
4. Place a layer of mulch under the tree.
5. Avoid soil compaction over roots, caused by foot or vehicle traffic, as this can 'suffocate' the tree.
6. Avoid major changes to the natural water source. Altered drainage works or a leaking pool could severely harm an established tree.

Central Coast Council tree preservation

- Check with your local council before removing any branches or trees, including dead trees.
- Your local council will also provide you with a list of undesirable species, such as Camphor Laurel, which may be removed without council permission.

Some of the plants on the following tables may only be available at specialist native nurseries.

Trees Suitable for Containers

Botanical Name	Size	Feature	L o c a l	T u b	S m a l l G a r d e n	F l o w e r i n g	S h a d e	P a r t	F u l l S u n
<i>Acmena</i> 'Rheophytic Race'	3-4m	Glossy foliage	-	T	S/G	Nov-Feb	-	P	F/s
<i>Agonis</i> 'After Dark'	3-5m	Purple foliage	-	T	S/G	Spring	-	P	F/s
<i>Corymbia</i> 'Summer Pink'	3-5m	Grafted, hardy	-	T	S/G	Dec-Feb	-	-	F/s
<i>Corymbia</i> 'Summer Red'	3m	Grafted, hardy	-	T	S/G	Dec-Feb	-	-	F/s
<i>Syzygium alatoramulum</i>	3-4m	Attractive tree	-	T	S/G	Nov-Jan	-	P	F/s
<i>Xanthostemon chrysanthus</i>	4-5m	Golden flowers	-	T	S/G	Jan-Mar	-	-	F/s

Trees Less than 10 metres

Botanical Name	Common Name	Feature	L o c a l	R i d g e	S i l o p e s	G u l l y	In f l o w e r	S h a d e	P a r t	Full S u n
<i>Acacia fimbriata</i>	Fringed wattle	Masses of flowers	L	-	-	G	Nov-Dec	Sh	P	-
<i>Acacia floribunda</i>	Sally wattle	Masses of flowers	L	-	S	G	Jul-Sept	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Acacia longifolia</i>	Sydney wattle	Showy flowers	L	-	S	G	Jun-Nov	-	P	Fs
<i>Acacia terminalis</i>	Sunshine wattle	Winter flowering	L	R	S	-	Mar-July	-	-	Fs
<i>Allocasuarina torulosa</i>	Forest oak	Graceful tree	L	-	S	G	Sep-Dec	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Angophora hispida</i>	Dwarf apple	Attractive flowers	L	R	-	-	Oct-Dec	-	P	Fs
<i>Backhousia citriodora</i>	Lemon myrtle	Perfumed flowers & foliage	-	-	-	G	January	-	P	Fs
<i>Backhousia myrtifolia</i>	Grey myrtle	Showy flowers	L	-	-	G	Nov-Dec	Sh	P	-
<i>Banksia ericifolia</i>	Heath Banksia	Striking candles	L	R	S	-	April-Aug	-	P	Fs
<i>Banksia serrata</i>	Saw Banksia	Bird attracting	L	R	S	-	Dec-June	-	P	Fs
<i>Callistemon salignus</i>	Willow bottlebrush	Paper bark	L	-	S	G	Sept-Oct	-	P	Fs
<i>Ceratopetalum gummiferum</i>	Christmas bush	Showy red in Dec.	L	-	-	G	Nov-Dec	-	P	Fs
<i>Corymbia eximia</i>	Yellow bloodwood	Striking flowers	L	R	S	-	October	-	P	Fs

Botanical Name	Common Name	Feature	L o c a l	R i d g e	S i l o p e s	G u l l y	In f l o w e r	S h a d e	P a r t	Full S u n
<i>Cupaniopsis anarcardioides</i>	Tuckeroo	Oranges fruits	L	-	S	G	May-Jul	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Elaeocarpus reticulatus</i>	Blueberry ash	Bell-like flowers	L	-	S	G	Oct-Dec	-	P	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus haemastoma</i>	Scribbly gum	Attractive trunk	L	R	-	-	Nov-Mar	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus luehmannii</i>	Yellow top ash	Attractive new growth	-	R	S	-	July-Nov	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus obtusiflora</i>	Port Jackson mallee	Attractive multi stems	L	R	S	-	Aug-Dec	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus stricta</i>	Mallee ash	Multi trunks	-	R	S	-	Dec-April	-	P	Fs
<i>Hakea laurina</i>	Pin cushion Hakea	Unusual pin cushion flowers	-	R	S	-	Autumn	-	-	Fs
<i>Hymenosporum flavum</i>	Native frangipani	Scented yellow flowers	-	-	S	G	Spring	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Pittosporum revolutum</i>	Yellow pittosporum	Attractive flowers	L	-	S	G	Sept-Oct	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Stenocarpus sinuatus</i>	Firewheel tree	Stunning flowers	-	-	S	G	Jan-Mar	-	P	Fs
<i>Trochocarpa laurina</i>	Tree heath	Interesting trunk	L	-	S	G	Jan-April	Sh	P	-

Trees 10 to 20 metres

Botanical Name	Common Name	Feature	L o c a l	R i d g e	S l o p e s	G u l l y	Flowering	S h a d e	P a r t	F u l l S u n
<i>Acacia binervia</i>	Coastal Myall	Blue/ green foliage	L	-	S	G	Sep-Oct	-	P	Fs
<i>Acacia elata</i>	Cedar wattle	Striking tree	L	-	-	G	Nov-Dec	-	P	Fs
<i>Acacia prominens</i>	Gosford wattle	Attractive tree	L	-	S	G	Jul-Oct	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Acmena smithii</i>	Lilly pilly	Attractive shade	L	-	-	-	Nov Feb	Sh	P	-
<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	Willow myrtle	Weeping habit	-	-	S	G	Sep-Nov	-	P	Fs
<i>Angophora floribunda</i>	Rough bark Angophora	Striking trunk	L	-	S	-	Oct-Dec	-	P	Fs
<i>Backhousia anisata</i>	Aniseed tree	Perfumed foliage	-	-	S	G	Dec-Feb	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coast Banksia	Attractive	L	-	S	G	Jan-June	-	P	Fs
<i>Callicoma serratifolia</i>	Black wattle	Cream flowers	L	-	-	G	Oct-Dec	Sh	P	-
<i>Cryptocarya glaucescens</i>	Brown Beech	Shade tree	L		S		Sep-Nov	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Darlingia darlingiana</i>	Brown silky Oak	Beautiful leaves	-	-	-	G	Sep-Nov	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Diploglottis cunninghamii</i>	Native Tamarind	Large attractive foliage	L	-	S	G	Sep-Nov	Sh	P	Fs

Botanical Name	Common Name	Feature	L o c a l	R i d g e	S l o p e s	G u l l y	Flowering	S h a d e	P a r t	F u l l S u n
<i>Eucalyptus piperita</i>	Peppermint	Attractive tree	L	R	-	-	Nov-Dec	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i>	Willow gum	Weeping branches	-	R	S	-	Nov-Dec	-	P	-
<i>Glochidion ferdinandi</i>	Cheese tree	Shade tree	L	-	-	G	October	Sh	P	-
<i>Podocarpus elatus</i>	Brown pine	Unusual conifer	L	-	S	G	Variable	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Synoum glandulosum</i>	Scentless Rosewood	Attractive fruit	L	-	-	G	Mar-Jul	Sh	P	-
<i>Syzygium paniculatum</i>	Bush cherry	Shade tree	L	-	-	G	Nov-May	Sh	P	-
<i>Syzygium oleosum</i>	Blue cherry	Blue Fruit	L	-	-	G	Dec-Mar	Sh	P	-
<i>Tristaniopsis laurina</i>	Water gum	Attractive flowers	L	-	S	G	Dec-Feb	Sh	P	

Trees Larger than 20 metres

Botanical Name	Common Name	Feature	L o c a l	R i d g e	S l o p e s	G u l l y	Flowering	S h a d e	P a r t	F u l l S u n
<i>Angophora costata</i>	Smooth bark apple	Red smooth trunk	L	R	S	G	Oct-Dec	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Brachychiton acerifolius</i>	Illawarra Flame tree	Striking red flowers	-	-	S	G	Oct-Dec	-	P ²	Fs
<i>Casuarina cunninghamiana</i>	River oak	Soil binding	L	R	S	G	May-Aug	-	P	Fs
<i>Casuarina glauca</i>	Swamp oak	Soil binding	L	-	-	G	May-Aug	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Spotted gum	Interesting trunk	L	R	S	G	May-Sep	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus acmenoides</i>	White mahogany	Attractive crown	L	R	S	G	Nov-Jan	-	P	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus punctata</i>	Grey gum	Colourful trunk	L	R	S	G	Dec-Mar	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus robusta</i>	Swamp mahogany	Food for birds	L	R	S	G	Apr-Sep	-	-	Fs
<i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	Sydney blue gum	Attractive tree	L	R	S	G	Jan-Apr	-	-	Fs
<i>Planchonella australis</i>	Black apple	Attractive leaves & trunk	L	-	S	-	Oct-Dec	-	P	Fs
<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i>	Turpentine	Interesting trunk	L	R	S	G	Oct-Dec	Sh	P	Fs
<i>Syzygium australe</i>	Lilly pilly	Screening tree	L	-	S	G	Oct-Dec	Sh	P	Fs

Botanical Name	Common Name	Feature	L o c a l	R i d g e	S l o p e s	G u l y	Flowering	S h a d e	P a r t	F u l l S u n
<i>Toona ciliata</i>	Red cedar	New red foliage	L	-		G	Oct-Nov	-	P	Fs