

Koala food trees



The koala is strictly a leaf eater. It may feed almost entirely on one or two species of a number of eucalypts and related species. Its strong teeth are valuable for eating eucalypt leaves - the premolars bite off the foliage while the molars grind the food. Koalas may drink if water is available, otherwise they get enough moisture from leaves and dew.

The long term survival of koalas will depend largely on private property owners retaining or improving koala habitat. Important local food trees include:

Queensland blue gum or forest red gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*)

Mainly found on river or creek flats or other fertile soils on hillslopes. Grows 20 to 40m tall. The smooth bark is shed in irregular plates with white-grey and bluish-grey patches. Frequently some rough bark is retained at the base of the tree. Flowers winter-spring.

Tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*)

Often found in moist eucalypt forest in hilly areas. Grows 35 to 40m. The persistent light brown to reddish-brown bark is soft, flaky and fibrous. Flowers in autumn - winter.

Small fruited grey gum (*Eucalyptus propinqua*)

Prefers moist, well-drained gravelly soils with some clay content on undulating hilly country. Will grow 20 to 35m tall. Irregular large flakes leave a mottled, granular matt surface. Newly exposed surface a striking rusty or orange colour, weathering to dark grey. Flowers late summer.

Spotted gum (*Corymbia citriodora* previously *Eucalyptus maculata*)

Grows on a range of soils, usually found on heavy-textured, well-drained soils on slopes and ridges. A medium to large tree 25 to 35m tall. The smooth whitish to light pinkish-grey bark has distinctive dimples. Flowers summer to winter.

Queensland grey ironbark (*Eucalyptus siderophloia*)

Usually occurs in sheltered valleys with alluvial soils on edges of flood plains or on stony slopes or ridges. It grows 20 to 30m. The persistent bark is hard, furrowed, light grey to black. Flowers winter to early summer.

Broad-leaved red ironbark (*Eucalyptus fibrosa* ssp. *fibrosa*)

Found a range of sites from poor sandstone to fair quality clay loams. Moderate sized tree, 20 to 30m. The persistent deeply furrowed bark is greyish black to black. Flowers summer.

