

Corymbia ficifolia (Red-flowering Gum)

- Origin:** South-western W.A, on fertile coastal sandy plains.
- Habit:** Small to medium, dense, rounded-domed, moderately long-lived, evergreen, native tree, 6-10m in height by 6-10m in width.
- Description:** Adult leaves are 8-15cm long, broad-lanceolate, concolourous, dark-green above, pale-green beneath, leathery, sometimes wavy-edged and with fine widely-spreading veins, Buds are in 3s or 7s, terminal corymbs, long pedicles and long red stamens. The large woody fruit are commonly known as 'Gum Nuts'. The bark is light grey, short fibered scaly and persistent.
- Tolerances:** Prefers sandy, free-draining soil, has low tolerance of waterlogging and compaction. While it can grow in other soil types, it often suffers from canopy die back, and performs poorly on clays. Red-flowering gum is highly tolerant of drought, wind and salt spray. Generally pest and disease free but can be prone to decay and root rot fungi in the later stages of maturity.
- Notes:** The tidy, generally compact crown provides an attractive silhouette. Profuse and spectacular show of summer flowers contrast well against the dark green foliage. Can be grown under powerlines. Nuts can cause litter issues in public spaces. Some recently produced stock has been grafted onto understock to enhanced its consistency and suitable growing environment. Grafted stock should be avoided until evaluation of graft compatibility occurs. New forms are available including a hybrid with *C. pychocharpa* called 'Summer Red', and other varieties with pink, orange and red flowers.
- Root space:** Based on mature size tree would require approximately 50m² area or 30m³ root volume (crown projection method),
- Availability:** Common.



Left: Red-flowering gum with terminal scarlet flowers in a street.

- Ref:** Costemons, L. (2003) *Native trees and shrubs of south-eastern Australia*, Reed New Holland, Australia.
 Metropolitan Tree Growers (2004) *The tree handbook 2004-2005: tree selections for urban planning*, 4th edn., Metropolitan Tree Growers Pty. Ltd.
 Spencer, R. (2002) *Horticultural flora of south-eastern Australia; flowering plants, dicotyledons, part 2*, University of NSW Press.
 The University of Melbourne Burnley College (2000) *The Burnley plant directory, a guide to the selection and recognition of landscape plants for south-eastern Australia*, The University of Melbourne, [Multi-media CD-ROM].