

Eucalyptus torquata

coral gum

Name: From the Latin *torquatus* (adorned with a necklace or collar), referring to its basally-ribbed buds and fruits.

The common name refers to the pink-orange colour of the flower buds and flowers. Also known as **Christmas tree**, **Coolgardie gum**, **Coolgardie rose**, **coral-flowered gum**, **goldfields red-flowering gum** and **pink-flowered gum**.

Authority: *Eucalyptus torquata* Luehm., *Victorian Naturalist* 13(11): 147 (1897). Type: near Coolgardie, WA, undated, W.A.Macpherson s.n. (holo: MEL; iso: K).

Key features: On stony sites high in the landscape. Small tree, lignotuber absent, fire-sensitive obligate seeder (a mallet). Bark rough, hard and dark on lower trunk, branches smooth. Adult leaves dull, grey-green. Buds and fruits in groups of 7, pendulous. Buds ornate, cylinder-shaped with a swollen, ribbed base. Bud caps ribbed, strongly beaked. Flowers pink to creamy-white. Fruits cylinder-shaped, ribbed at base.

Distribution & Habitat: **WA (endemic to the goldfields).** Restricted to a north-south distribution in the southern goldfields, from the Jaurdi Hills and Bulong areas southwards to the Lake Dundas area (south of Norseman). It mostly occurs on greenstone hills and rises, in stony orange-brown loams with calcrete nodules. Associated eucalypts include *E. celastroides*, *E. clelandiorum*, *E. dundasii*, *E. griffithsii*, *E. le-souefii*, *E. longissima*, *E. melanoxyton*, *E. planipes*, *E. salomon-phloia* and *E. stricklandii*.

Notes: A distinctive small tree in the field, with its usual habitat on hill-tops, its rough, dark grey bark on the lower trunk, its moderately dense canopy of grey-green leaves, and its cream to more commonly pink flowers.

The species has become one of the most widely planted eucalypts in Australia due to its small tree habit, its highly

subgenus *Symphyomyrtus*
sect. *Dumaria*, ser. *Torquatae*

ornamental buds, flowers and fruits, its propensity to flower at a young age, and its long flowering period. It is planted throughout towns in western NSW, north-western Victoria, and the drier parts of SA and southern WA. It has proven to be an excellent park and street tree, and is generally structurally very sound, long-lived and drought-tolerant.

Hybrids of *E. torquata* × *E. woodwardii* (lemon-flowered gum) are common in cultivation wherever the two species are grown together. This hybrid, known as *Eucalyptus* × ‘**Torwood**’ (Torwood gum) has features that are generally intermediate between those of its two quite different-looking parental species. However, there is much variability among individuals of the hybrid, with some trees having features more like *E. torquata* and others tending to be more like *E. woodwardii*. This hybrid is not known in the wild because the two species do not have overlapping natural distributions.

Conservation status: Key reserves include Brockway FR, Kambalda TR, Kurrawang NR, Yallari TR and unnamed conservation reserves around Norseman. As an obligate seeder blackbutt (killed by intense fire and regenerating from seed only) it is highly threatened by increasing fire frequency and intensity, with plants taking a decade or two to develop a canopy-stored seed bank.

World:	IUCN Red List: Least Concern (2025).
National:	EPBC Act 1999: Not listed (2025).
State (WA):	BC Act 2016/DBCA: Not listed (2025).



Painting of seedling from south of Coolgardie



Red Hill at Kambalda, overlooking Lake Lefroy



Description: Erect, single-trunked **tree**, 5–12 m tall, ligno-tuber absent, obligate seeder (mallet). **Bark** rough on lower trunk up to the first branches, tightly held, dark grey; smooth above, cream to grey to pale orange-brown. **Branchlets** non-pruinose; pith glands present. **Cotyledons** reniform. **Juvenile leaves** opposite for a few pairs then alternate, pedicellate, lanceolate, 50–120 mm long × 12–20 mm wide, dull, grey-green. **Adult leaves** pedicellate, lanceolate to falcate, 80–115 mm long × 13–20 mm wide, dull, grey-green. **Inflorescences** axillary; umbels 7-flowered, pendulous; peduncles terete, 12–40 mm long; pedicels 8–25 mm wide. **Buds** cylindrical, 18–30 mm long × 7–12 mm wide; hypanthia base strongly ribbed then smooth or less ribbed to the opercula join; opercula strongly ribbed at the base then smooth above, prominently beaked, apiculate. **Flowers** pink to white; in winter to summer. **Fruits** pedicellate, pendulous, cylindrical, ribbed at base, 10–16 mm long × 9–12 mm wide; disc level to descending; valves 4 or 5, below rim level. **Seeds** dark brown.