



# Tulipwood

ID # 42

## Not just ornamental

The colourful fruit is one of the most appealing features of this ornamental tree and that's what makes it a popular choice as a street tree, garden tree, and in native and wildlife gardens.



Tulipwood is a beautiful, native, hardy, and well-behaved small tree with an attractive and shapely crown that suits landscapes well. It's commonly used along urban coastal roads, as its toughness helps it to thrive in salty areas along ocean shores and in the less than ideal air and soil of the city.

## Functional too

It's also a tree that provides high-quality lumber. Light, straight grained and even textured, its colour ranges from blond to brown and even to green and purple in places and is perfect for turnery and cabinet timber.



**Family:** *Sapindaceae*

**Genus:** *Harpullia*

**Botanic name:** *Harpullia pendula*

*Harpullia* derives from *Harpulli* its native name in Bengal when European science formally published the name and description of this genus and its *H. cupanioides* type specimen from India in 1824; *pendula* are trees that have a weeping crown shape

**Also known as:** Tulipwood, Tulip Lancewood, Queensland Tulipwood, Black Tulip, Black Tulipwood, Mogun-mogun

**Origin:** *Harpullia pendula* is endemic to Australia, in North East and Central Eastern Queensland and southwards as far as north-eastern New South Wales.

**Habitat:** Tulipwood occurs in various types of rainforest – by streams or dry rainforests on basaltic or alluvial soils and in tropical and sub-tropical rainforest.

**Description:** Medium-sized tree, up to 24m tall and a stem diameter of 60cm. Usually seen much smaller up to 6m.

The trunk is irregular in shape, often fluted. Bark is grey and scaly.

Leaves are pinnate and alternate on the stem. There are three to eight leaflets, mostly 5-12cm long, 2-5cm wide. Elliptic or narrowly elliptic, with a short blunt point at the tip. Leaf veins clearly seen on both sides, midrib raised on both surfaces.



Light green, 5-petaled flowers form on panicles from November to January, 15mm in diameter with petals about 7-8mm long, pubescent on the inner surface.



Fruit forms late summer, being a two lobed yellow or red capsule. These capsules on heavy panicles open, revealing dark and very shiny seeds between the two halves of each capsule.

Most often, there are two seed capsule pods for each flower, and they open back to back with their dark shiny seeds facing opposite of each other.

**Propagation and cultivation:** Seeds germinate easily from two weeks to two months. Fresh seed is advised for regeneration. One special note: The Tulipwood tree is dioecious, and requires a male and female tree to set fruit.



## Sources:

Harpullia pendula site: [www.anbg.gov.au](http://www.anbg.gov.au)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harpullia\\_pendula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harpullia_pendula)  
<https://brisbanetrees.com.au/tulipwood/>