



Smooth-barked Apple Gum



Urbanisation can sometimes be a good thing for native wildlife

A recent study investigated the influence urbanisation has on native trees, including the *Angophora costata*, and the flow-on effect on fauna such as birds. The study focused on three different locations: streetscapes (urban areas), remnant vegetation, and continuous forest and found that trees in the streetscapes flowered earlier and for a longer period of time than those in the remnant vegetation and continuous forest environment. The longer flowering period of trees in urban landscapes was also observed to significantly predict the presence of some nectarivorous bird populations such as Rainbow Lorikeets (*Trichoglossus heamatodus*) and Musk Lorikeets (*Glossopsitta concinna*). So, while urbanization is a bad thing for most native animals, it has some flow-on effects that make it a great place for a few species that now occupy cities in great abundance.



Sources:

Encyclopaedia Botanica by Frances Bodkin
North Head Sanctuary Foundation.org.au
ANBG site
Australian Museum website

Uses:

The red bark exudate of *Angophora costata* was dissolved in warm water, and when cooled, the liquid was taken to relieve severe diarrhoea.

Family: *Myrtaceae*

Genus: *Angophora*

Botanic name: *Angophora costata*

From Greek, *angos* meaning “vessel” or “goblet”, and *phorus* “to bear”, referring to the cup shape of the fruits; *costata* – ribbed; the capsules bear prominent ribs

Also known as: Smooth-barked Apple, Apple Gum, Sydney Red Gum

Origin: Indigenous to New South Wales and Queensland

Habitat: Light to heavy, stony soils to an open, sunny position. Occurs naturally on the sandy soils and stony ridges of southern Queensland forests, extending inland as far as the Warrego district. In New South Wales it extends from Sydney northwards to the Central Coast and as far west as Bathurst, being particularly common on Hawkesbury sandstone where it forms almost pure stands.



Description: An evergreen, it grows to a height of 30m with a spread of 10m. The stem is covered with smooth, pink bark and has twisted, gnarled branches and an open textured crown. The old bark is shed in spring in large flakes with the new salmon-pink bark turning to pale grey before the next shedding. This gives the reason for the name Sydney Red Gum.

The leaves are light green, lanceolate, prominently mid-ribbed, opposite, petioled and 16cm long. New leaves are red in colour. Flowers are white occurring in large fluffy terminal clusters and appearing from Spring to early Summer. *Angophora costata* trees can live over 100 years and these old trees typically have many dimples, contorted branches and large bowl-like swellings (hence the reference to “apple” in the common name).



Propagation and cultivation: Propagation is by seed. The species responds to bushfire by resprouting from epicormic buds and its lignotuber; shoots on branches of older specimens arise after a month, while shoots resprout from the trunk and base young plants within a month of a hot fire. Seedlings appear within 9 to 10 months.

ID # 321