

Crows Ash - *Flindersia australis*



Also known as **flindosy** or **Australian teak**, is a species of tree that is endemic to north-eastern Australia. Its northern extent is Mt Dryander near Airlie Beach, west to Carnarvon Gorge and south to Kempsey in New South Wales. It can tolerate a range of conditions from rainforest to dry scrub.

The *Flindersia* is a small but important group of timber species.

The *Flindersia* evolved in Australia and some species have spread north to New Guinea and adjoining areas.

The genus *Flindersia* and *F. australis* were first formally described in 1814 by Robert Brown in Matthew Flinders' sea voyage journal *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, from specimens collected near Broad Sound, north of Gladstone Queensland in September 1802.

Other Australian *Flindersia* are;

- *F. acuminata* - silver silkwood, silver maple restricted to Queensland
- *F. bennettii* – Bennett's Ash, New South Wales and Queensland
- *F. bourjotiana* – Queensland Silver Ash, restricted to Queensland
- *F. brassii* - – hard scented maple, Claudie River scented maple, restricted to Queensland
- *F. brayleyana* - Queensland maple, maple silkwood, New South Wales and Queensland
- *F. collina* - broad-leaved leopard tree, New South Wales and Queensland
- *F. dissosperma* - scrub leopardwood, restricted to Queensland
- *F. ifflana* - hickory ash, Cairns hickory, restricted to Queensland
- *F. laevicarpa* - scented maple, rose ash, Queensland and New Guinea
- *F. maculosa* - leopardwood, leopard tree, New South Wales and Queensland
- *F. oppositifolia* - mountain silkwood, restricted to Queensland
- *F. pimenteliana* - maple silkwood, rose silkwood, Queensland and New Guinea
- *F. schottiana* - silver ash, cudgerie, bumpy ash, , New South Wales, Queensland and New Guinea
- *F. xanthoxyla* - yellowwood, long jack, New South Wales and Queensland

Description

Typically grows to a height of 40m, larger trees usually having a buttressed trunk. The leaves are usually arranged alternately and are crowded near the ends of the branchlets. The leaves usually have between five and nine elliptical to egg-shaped leaflets that are 24–130mm long and 8–43mm wide.



The flowers are arranged in panicles 50–150mm long and usually include a few male-only flowers. The five sepals are about 2mm long and the five petals are white to cream coloured, 6–7mm long and densely hairy on the back and part of the front. Flowering occurs from September to October and the fruit is a woody capsule 45–100mm long and studded with short, rough points. The seeds are 34–50mm long and winged.

Young stems densely hairy with simple, clustered or stellate hairs, older stems becoming hairless. Bark brown, scaly, shed in oval flakes leaving depressions, which gives the trunk a spotted appearance.

Timber properties



It is a strong, dense and durable. It is used mainly for flooring (including dance floors), boat building and outdoor furniture.

The heartwood ranges from yellowish-brown to yellow. The sapwood is usually paler than the heartwood. A firm, compact, close grained, greasy wood, generally without pronounced figure. However, there may be an occasional water wave effect. The vessel lines are often filled with a brownish deposit.

It is slow to dry and surface checking may occur if it is dried too quickly. However there is negligible collapse. It is fair for steam bending. The sapwood is susceptible to Lyctid borers but termite resistant.

While it is visually appealing, this species is not easy to work with, which limits the applications it can be used for. Crow's ash is quite greasy which means it is hard to glue and nail. A swabbing with methylated spirits could be helpful before gluing.

Green density about 1050kg/m³ and air dried density about 950kg/m³. Shrinkage 3% radial and 4% tangential. Janka hardness rating of 8.5 green and 11 dried.