

BOX - TREE

Box trees are a group of *eucalypts* having variable amounts of rough bark on the trunk and larger branches. Typical box bark is scaly or flaky. General types can be identified as follows:

1. LEAVES SHINY GREEN:

- **BIMBLE BOX (*e populnea*) - also known as POPLAR BOX**
Leaves rounded and broad - its shiny green leaves resemble those of the Poplar. It grows best on clayey soils especially those in depressions or in other areas which may become flooded or waterlogged. Such areas are often best left for grazing use only.
- **PILLIGA BOX (*e pilligaensis*)**
Leaves narrow and long - As the name suggests this tree is common in the Pilliga area. It grows in heavy soils in forests of IRONBARK and BLACK PINE.

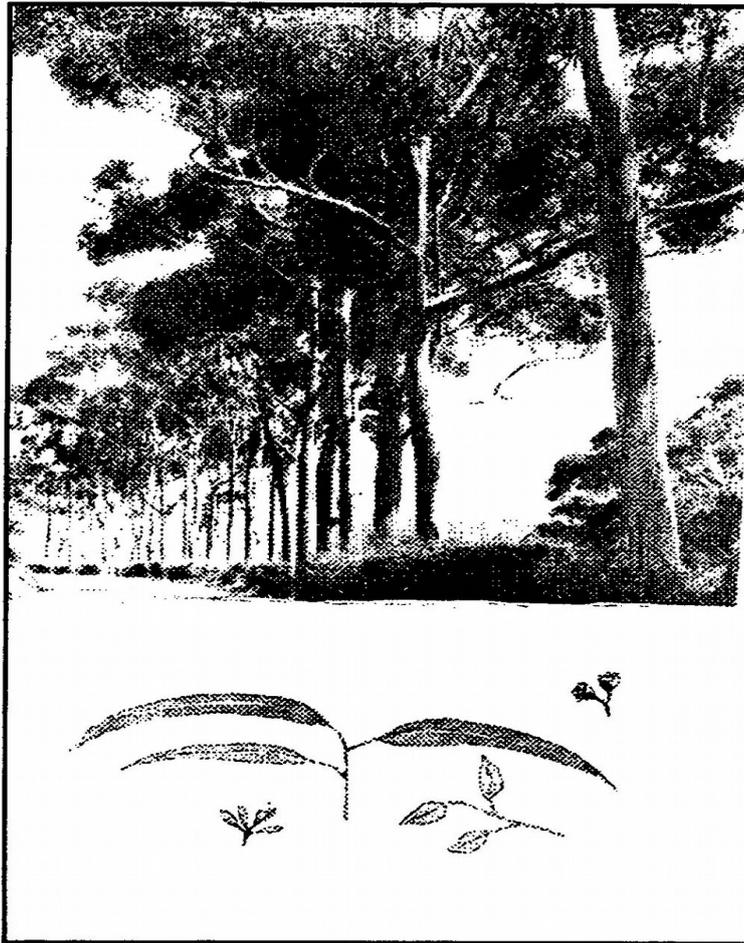
2. LEAVES ASHY OR GREEN-GREY BUT NOT SHINY:

- **WHITE BOX (*e elbens*)**
Spreading tree, ashy leaves, fruits 6-15mm long - This is the dominant tree on areas of rich well drained soil especially, volcanic soil such as basalt. It is one of the few trees to grow commonly on heavy (clayey) black soil. WHITE BOX may occur in forests as the main or dominant species, associated with YELLOW BOX and ROUGH-BARKED APPLE. Rarely found on high altitudes, in high rainfall areas, on rough or mountainous country nor on low rainfall level lands. It is regarded as an indicator of fair land providing good grazing and where contour permits, good wheat land.
- **GREY BOX**
The term Grey Box is often used instead of white box. This is because of the occurrence of box timber on wider areas with a greater variety of soil and in lower rainfall belts.

The further from good rainfall and undulating country falling away from the higher or mountainous country, the greater became the variation in the character and appearance of this timber until a point is reached when it may be described as an ill favoured rough, squat tree mostly growing in belts about natural swamps on clay formation and with ill defined or no subsoil. Therefore the box generally, is not a good indicator on a large scale but may be a good indicator at the microscale.

DIAGRAM 1 YELLOW BOX - *eucalyptus melliodora*

YELLOW BOX - *Eucalyptus melliodora*



Courtesy: Jacaranda Press

- **YELLOW BOX (*e melliodora*)**

Large tree, drooping. Fruit less than 6mm. May have very little bark on trunk. Yellow Box occurs on the ranges and western slopes of NSW and Victoria. In the eastern part of its habitat, it is found generally, on gentle slopes and foothills. Further, west, however, it is largely restricted to the flats along rivers and watercourses.

It is found on many soil types and its presence indicates some sand content in the upper soil layer although it prefers heavier rather than sandy soil. Similar environment to that of the white box but usually occurs on nearby deeper soil.

- This timber favours the boundary with alluvial and intermixes with Apple and Forest Gum. Yellow box country except in heavy and reliable rainfall areas may be subject to wind erosion because of the depth and friable nature of the surface soil.

The YELLOW BOX is the best honey tree of the eucalypts as it flowers profusely throughout the summer. As a solitary specimen it has a large dense top from about 1/3 the way up the trunk making it a well balanced tree with a large round crown, graceful pendulous branches and subglaucous leaves. It is excellent timber for firewood and fencing.