



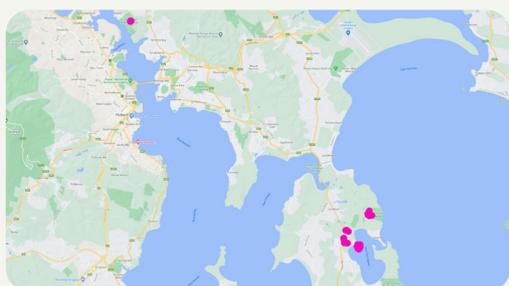
Growing Morrisby's gum

Morrisby's gum is one of Australia's most threatened eucalypts and is iconic to the Cremorne area. It is found only at two sites on Hobart's Eastern Shore. In recent years there has been a sharp decline in the largest stand of these trees, which have been reduced from around 2,000 adult trees to only a handful surviving.

Seed collecting and planting has been an important part of conservation efforts for this species.

Not a drought tolerant species!

While Morrisby's gum is from a coastal region, it is not drought tolerant and is highly palatable to browsers. This species requires a higher level of care than other native plants, although the general principles of site selection, site preparation, planting method and maintenance still apply.



This factsheet outlines things to consider when growing Morrisby's gum for conservation efforts.



Site selection. Not too close to your house!

- Are there high numbers of wildlife browsers, including brush-tailed possums? Plants grown from seed sourced from the Cremorne areas is especially palatable to browsers and browsing can kill large established Morrisby's gum trees.
- Consider how you will water plants, especially during establishment and over the summer.
- Wetter, southerly, or westerly sites are better.

Plan your planting



Site preparation

- Control weeds in the planting site, ideally starting the spring prior to planting.
- If the site allows, rip and mound and allow for the soil to settle prior to planting. Spot cultivation can be undertaken in for less accessible sites with fragile soils. Sandy sites may not require cultivation prior to planting if the soil is not compacted.
- Fence the site to exclude from wildlife browsers if there is no protection from browsers.
- Plant when there is sufficient soil moisture.

Planting method

- Thoroughly water your plants before planting, make sure potting mix is wet.
- For each planting site scrape a shallow bowl (50cm wide x 5cm deep). Place the scrapings on the downside of your bowl to build a small dam.
- Dig a hole in the centre of the bowl (spade width). Break up any soil clumps before placing the excavated soil right next to the hole for back filling.

- Remove the plant from its pot. Note: Do not pull the plant out of the pot by its stem
- Turn the pot on its side. Gently squeeze the end of the pot to loosen the plant and tap it on a solid object and the plant should slide out and rest in your hand. If the plant is root-bound loosen the roots.
- Use fertilizer tablets formulated for native plants. Place fertiliser 5-10cm away from the root ball, and 5-10cm below the surface.
- Plant the seedling into the centre of the hole so that the top of the root ball ends up 1-2 cm below ground level. Make sure all the roots are pointing down.
- Backfill with loose material dug from your hole, pressing it down with your fingers (not too hard!) so to eliminate any air pockets and achieve good root-soil contact. Make sure all the potting mix is covered by soil.
- Gently water the plant with a few litres of water.
- For sandy soils consider using water crystal and mulching plants to increase water retention.

Keeping them alive



Maintenance

- Visit the site regularly and act swiftly to address any issues:
 - control weeds or pests,
 - repair cages and fences if browsers are causing damage and can access plants.
- Morrisby's gums require watering during establishment and in hot dry conditions – but not too often as the roots need to be encouraged to go deep for water.
- Weed control to reduce competition close to the plants (a radius of 1-1.5 m around each plant) is important for the first 2 years. This can be done using slashing, brush cutting and hand weed or use of selective herbicide. Take care using selective herbicides around young plants. General weed control across the site should be ongoing.
- Infill planting is important to maintain the integrity of the planting design and should be undertaken in the following planting season.



Protect your plantings from wildlife

While protection is only required for 2-3 years for other Eucalypt species, browsers have killed mature Morrisby's gums and protection needs to be maintained in areas with there are high browser numbers.

Caging seedlings and saplings

- For areas with no possum browsing use 900m black mesh guards are ideal and can be removed after 2 years or once the plants are >1m tall.
- For area with possum browsing use 3 x 1.2m star pickets and heavy gauge wire mesh to make cages with floppy tops. These cages can be left in place as the trees mature.



Banding mature trees

- polycarbonate rather than metal bands. -- They fasten to themselves, are safer during fire & do not harbor insects.

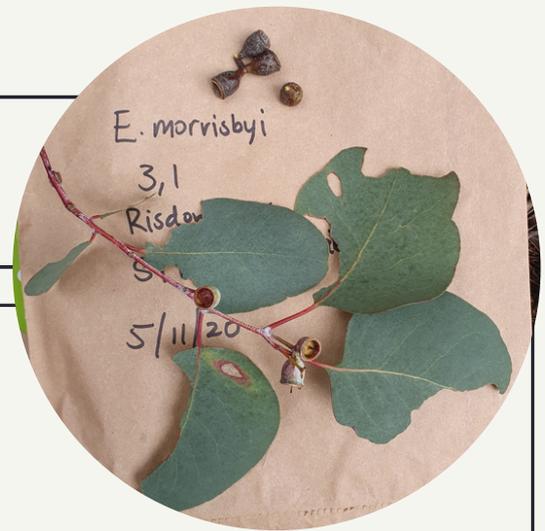
Other information

Source and collect seed

- Collection of Morrisby's gum seed from wild stands requires a permit.
- Many of the previous planting of this species have limited genetic diversity, so are not necessarily good seed sources.
- Seed collected from wild and planted Morrisby's gums can include hybrids with other Eucalypts. Remove hybrids before planting. Hybrids can be recognised by the shape of their juvenile foliage.



Please contact Magali:
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