

DRY RAINFOREST TREES

Rainforest is not limited by rain or soil type in eastern Australia, but more by the frequency of fires burning through a particular area. Rainforests are very sensitive to fire and will not survive a 'big burn'. Thus rainforests are usually found in high rainfall regions. Even so, some species can grow in dry districts if given some protection from fires in localities such as gullies, on south eastern slopes, in rocky areas and so forth. Rainforest species, native to these forests, can cope with dry conditions and in fact may suffer root rot or fungal leaf diseases when grown in wetter areas. The species below are appropriate for planting in drier areas of the Northern Rivers and south - east Queensland, such as westerly facing slopes and rain shadow areas. If you live in a drier area, these species are the most suitable for you to grow as they can cope with drought much better than most other rainforest species. All species listed are native to north - east NSW and south - east Queensland. If you wish to expand on this listing, you may like to reference the following books for those species native to dry rainforests.

Recommended Reading:

Jones, David L. *Rainforest Plants of Australia*. Reed Books P/L. 1986.

Lines-Kelly, Rebecca & Currey, Anne (Eds). *Trees for the NSW North Coast*. NSW Dept of Agriculture. 1992.

Nicholson, Nan & Nicholson, Hugh. *Australian Rainforest Plants*. Vols I, II, III, IV & V. 1985-2000.

Radke, Peter & Radke, Ann. *Growing Australian Tropical Plants*. Frith & Frith Books, 1993.

Williams, J B, Harden, G J & McDonald, W J F. *Trees & Shrubs in Rainforests of NSW & South East Queensland*. Botany Department, University of New England. 1984.

Rainforest Species	Height (m)	Growth Rate	Comments
Ash species			
Alphitonia species	8-10	Fast	Fast growing pioneer species. Often will self sow, if mature trees are located in the area. Excellent in initial plantings to create a quick canopy. Hardy in full sun and tolerant of cold conditions.
Bunya Pine			
Araucaria bidwillii	25-35	Mod	Large upright tree. The large cones yield edible bunya nuts. May take several years to become established. Valuable timber tree. Frost and cold tolerant.
HoopPine			
Araucaria cunninghamii	25-35	Mod	Large upright tree. May take several years to become established. Valuable timber tree. Frost and cold tolerant.

Barklya

Barklya syringifolia 8 Slow Slow growing species, with showy yellow flowers. Grows best in a sunny position with good moisture.

Flame Tree

Brachychiton acerifolius 10 Mod Beautiful red flowers are displayed in spring, when the tree is deciduous. Needs a well drained soil and copes with some frost.

Broadleaved Bottle Tree

Brachychiton australis 10 Mod Fast growing, tolerates light frost and drought resistant. It produces a dense canopy and is suitable to grow as a shade tree in drier areas. It needs excellent drainage. White, scented flowers are produced in spring, when the tree is out of leaf.

Lacebark Tree

Brachychiton discolor 12 Mod Attractive pink flowers can be produced prolifically in a dry season. Easy to grow in very well drained soils. Aboriginals ate the roasted seeds.

Leichhardt Bean

Cassia brewsteri 2-12 Fast Flowers prolifically in autumn. Adaptable to different soil types so long as they are free draining. Prefers a warm, frost free site.

Velvet Bean Tree

Cassia tomentella 5-10 Mod Attractive tree producing bright yellow flowers in the spring dry season. Likes well drained, fertile soils. Copes with full sun.

Jak Wood

Cryptocarpus glaucescens 10 Fast Common species occurring in a variety of habitats. Black fruit attracts birds.

Native Tamarind

Diploglottis australis 10 Mod Tall upright tree. The orange fruit are eaten by fruit bats and birds in spring. Will grow in sun or shade. Needs a site protected from heavy frosts and strong winds.

Spear Lily

Doryanthes palmeri 2-3 Slow Arching red flowers attract nectar feeding birds. Grows naturally on steep slopes with well drained soils. Do not plant in wet areas.

Bat's Wing Coral Tree <i>Erythrina vespertilo</i>	2-30	Mod	In dry areas, this tree may only become a small shrub, but with more moisture it can reach 30m. The orange flowers attract birds. Suitable for dry well drained sites with low humidity. Fast growing in full sun. Frost hardy.
Sandpaper Fig <i>Ficus fraseri</i>	8	Fast	A common species that will often self regenerate. It is a valuable food source for birds. It is easy to grow and plants will establish themselves quickly. Briefly deciduous in cold areas.
Port Jackson Fig <i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>	15-20	Mod	Non strangling fig, which often is found growing over rocky outcrops. It occurs in coastal and dry rainforests. The fruit is an important food source for many bird species.
Deciduous Fig <i>Ficus superba</i> var <i>henneana</i>	15-20	Mod	A strangling fig found in drier rainforests. Trees have a short deciduous period.
Teak <i>Flindersia australis</i>	20	Slow	Gives dense shade and found in a wide variety of habitats. Produces a good timber.
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Leopard Tree <i>Flindersia collina</i>	12-20	Slow	Gives dense shade and found in a wide variety of habitats. Will grow on poorer soils. A good timber tree.
Long Jack <i>Flindersia xanthoxyla</i>	15	Mod	Gives dense shade and found in a wide variety of habitats. Will grow on poorer soils. A good timber tree.
Silky Oak <i>Grevillea robusta</i>	20-30	Fast	Cabinet tree. The nectar rich, yellow flowers are a good food source for fruit bats and bird in spring.
Guioa <i>Guioa semiglauca</i>	10	Fast	Common pioneer species. May grow with multi trunks. Plant in a sheltered site to protect from strong winds. Fruit relished by birds.

Tulip Wood Harpullia pendula	10	Mod	Prefers a fertile soil, but is adaptable to less favourable sites. Protect from frost when young. Copes with drier soils and full sun. Produces a beautiful timber.
Grease Nut .Hernandia bivalvis	10-12	Mod	Initial growth can be slow. Needs a sunny position with a well drained soil and good fertility. A good specimen tree for house gardens.
Native Rosella Hibiscus heterophyllus	3-6	Fast	Flowers are large and showy during the warm season. Hardy to grow, provided the soil is well drained.
Native Frangipani Hymenosporum flavum	10	Fast	Tall slender medium sized tree. Clusters of yellow, scented flowers in spring. Strong winds may damage the branches.
Brush Box Lophostemon confertus	20-30	Fast	Frost hardy. Tolerates a wide range of soils. May be grown on dry ridges and in exposed positions. Excellent border tree for rainforest plantings to protect the more sensitive trees from hot winds and burning sun.
Mallotus Mallotus species	8-10	Fast	Pioneer species, which may self sow if adult trees are located in the area.
White Cedar Melia azedarach	15	Fast	Grows well in difficult sites. The perfumed, lilac-coloured flowers. Fruit is poisonous to humans but is readily eaten by birds. Frost tolerant.
Finger Lime Microcitrus australasica	1-6	Slow	Can grow in seasonally dry forests. Fruit is edible and used in marmalades and in cooking.
Native Murraya Murraya ovatifoliolata	1-5	Mod	This species has showy white flowers, with the scent of jasmine or orange blossom. Plant as an alternative to the exotic, weedy Murraya paniculata.
Wonga Vine Pandorea pandorana	Vines	Fast	The attractive flowers bloom over several months. Plant this species as an alternative to exotic vines, which can become a serious weed problem.

Black Apple

Planchonella australis	12	Slow	Slow growing tree. Fruit eaten by fruit bats. A cabinet timber tree.
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Burdekin Plum

Pleiogynium timorense	10-12	Mod	Very hardy and able to survive long periods of drought. Needs good drainage and plenty of sun. Winter deciduous with frost tolerance. Large edible fruit.
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Plum Pine

Podocarpus elatus	10-20	Slow	Slow growing in the initial stages. Birds eat the fruit. Produces a good timber.
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Deep Yellow Wood

Rhodosphaera rhodanthema	15	Fast	Very attractive tree. It is hardy to dry spells and copes well with sun. Must have well drained soils. Valuable timber tree.
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Turrea

Turrea pubescens	3-4	Mod	White fragrant flowers. Copes with hot, dry climates, if grown in a semi-sheltered site. Intolerant of wet soils and humid conditions.
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