

Eucalyptus pauciflora

snow gum

The 'snow gums'

Origin of name: From the Latin *paucus* (few) and *florus* (flowered). The name is somewhat misleading, as the species can flower quite abundantly.

The common name refers to its natural habitat, which includes the snowfields of south-eastern Australia.

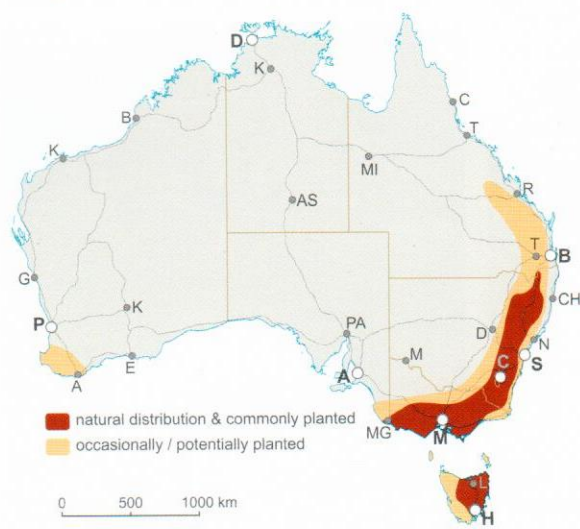
Other names: Baw Baw snow gum (subsp. *acerina*), cabbage ash, cabbage gum (Tas), Falls Creek snow gum (subsp. *hedraia*), Jounama snow gum (subsp. *debeuzevillei*), ghost gum, Mount William snow gum (subsp. *parvifructa*), weeping gum (Tas), white sallee.

Plants are sometimes marketed as *E. 'Edna Walling'*, *E. 'Little Snowman'* and *E. pauciflora 'small form'*.

Features: Tree, 4–20 m tall (rarely to 30 m tall in the wild), single or several-trunked from an inconspicuous lignotuber. Bark smooth, seasonally white to grey to colourfully streaked with yellowish to pink to red, shedding in strips, sometimes with conspicuous scribbles. Juvenile leaves stalked, oval-shaped, blue-green. Adult leaves lance-shaped to oval-shaped, 12–50 mm wide, shiny, green to blue-green, with side veins nearly parallel to the leaf margins. Buds and fruits in groups of 7–30+. Buds club-shaped. Flowers white, occurring mainly in spring and summer. Fruits round to cup-shaped to broadly funnel-shaped, 6–15 mm wide.

Six subspecies are recognised:

- **subsp. *pauciflora*:** Widespread at all altitudes. Branchlets, buds and fruits not or variably waxy-white.
- **subsp. *parvifructa*:** High altitudes on the Mt William Range in the Grampians of Vic. Smaller leaves, buds and fruits.
- **subsp. *acerina*:** Baw Baw Plateau area in Vic. Branchlets, buds and fruits not waxy-white. Leaves very shiny, green.
- **subsp. *hedraia*:** High altitudes in the Falls Creek–Mt Bogong area, Vic. Branchlets waxy-white. Buds and fruits lacking individual stalks, waxy-white. Fruits large.



Why plant me?

- ▶ Ornamental tree for landscape planting
- ▶ Smooth, pale-coloured or colourfully-streaked bark
- ▶ Rounded crown of shiny green leaves
- ▶ Good street tree
- ▶ Fast-growing
- ▶ Extremely cold tolerant

- **subsp. *niphophila* (syn. *E. niphophila* and *E. pauciflora* var. *alpina*):** High altitude alpine areas such as Snowy Mountains in NSW and Alpine National Park in Vic. Smaller habit (4–8 m tall). Branchlets, buds and fruits waxy-white. Leaves, buds and fruits smaller.
- **subsp. *debeuzevillei* (syn. *E. debeuzevillei*):** High altitudes in the Brindabella and Jounama ranges on the NSW/ACT border. Branchlets, buds and fruits waxy-white. Mature buds strongly angular.

Natural distribution & habitat: Widespread but scattered in the Great Dividing Range of south-eastern Australia, from the Qld/NSW border near Stanthorpe, south through the colder parts of NSW and Vic to south of Mount Gambier in far south-eastern SA, as well as in Tas. It occurs from near sea level (SA and southern Vic) up to about 2000 m above sea level, forming the tree-line on mainland Australia. It grows on well-drained sites in sandy or rocky soils.

Cultivation & uses: Widely grown in south-eastern Australia, especially in Melbourne, where it has been popularly planted over the last couple of decades. All subspecies make excellent landscape trees, with their smooth, pale-coloured to colourfully-streaked trunk and their rounded crown of shiny green leaves. Most plants in cultivation are subsp. *pauciflora*, which is the fastest-growing and grows larger than the other subspecies. The high-altitude variants, and especially subsp. *niphophila*, tend to be slower-growing and smaller in size (4–8 m tall), even when planted on more-sheltered, lowland sites. Subspecies *debeuzevillei* is one of the best eucalypts for planting in areas with very low minimum temperatures.

Trees can be fast-growing when young. The trunk is rarely straight and unbranched for very far. The eventual size of the tree partly depends on the subspecies and seed source, and partly on the environmental conditions in which it is planted. The species requires a well-drained soil, and is mildly drought tolerant.

Management: A generally problem-free species. Trees are structurally very sound, and rarely shed branches.

Similar species:

- ***E. lacrimans* (weeping snow gum)**, p. 106
A closely-related species, differing from *E. pauciflora* most conspicuously in its less compact crown of long, very slender, drooping branches. It is naturally restricted to the Southern Tablelands of NSW, and has recently become sought-after for planting. Hybrids between the two species are sometimes seen in cultivation.