

Red Gum, River Red Gum, keenah, kafur

GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean, sub-tropical, tropical
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: high

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: resistant
Irrigation	: low
Salinity/ppm	: very high (13000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -9°C

SHAPE

Type	: tree
Height	: 25 m-35 m
Spread	: 7 m-10 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: white, pale yellow
Period	: June - August
Smell	: aroma, leaf, spicy

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 0.6 cm
Toxicity	: inedible

The Red Gum tree, known in Arabic as keenah or kafur, is the most common Eucalyptus to be seen in the Arriyadh region. Native to Australia, which claims over 500 species of the genus, it has been introduced into many arid countries throughout the world, where they now have the reputation of being invasive, too large and too greedy. Massive with a weeping habit and open crown, it grows very rapidly to a height of 30 metres. Its familiar smooth bark is white and grey, which, when shed in long strips, exposes a red colour underneath. Lanceolate, straight and curved leaves with a fragrant sap are a matt, blue-green; yellowish-white flowers occur in early summer and the seed pods are pea-sized nutlets. *E. camaldulensis* requires full sun, and although drought tolerant, it will do better with periodic deep watering. It is very tolerant of all soils, even those waterlogged and with a high pH and salinity, but is susceptible to chlorosis. Propagation is by seed. Frost-tolerant, the tree is valuable in giving shade, but it is too huge for garden planting. It plays an important role as a wind break, in reafforestation, stabilising watercourses, and is suitable for roadside planting and parks. *E. camaldulensis* has a habit of dropping large boughs without warning – a form of self-pruning, but a major problem in urban areas. It is a high-maintenance tree, producing a large amount of leaf, bark and seed litter; its roots are deep, spreading and very aggressive. Young trees must be well-staked and pruned to create a strong vertical trunk.

