

Hornsby Shire's Blue Gum High Forests

Blue Gum High Forest is a moist, tall open forest community.

Its dominant canopy trees are Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*) and blackbutt (*E. pilularis*). Other trees include forest oak (*Allocasuarina torulosa*) and Sydney red gum (*Angophora costata*). Understorey plants include prickly beard heath (*Leucopogon juniperinus*), narrow-leaved geebung (*Persoonia linearis*) and hop bush (*Dodonaea triquetra*). In moist gullies, rainforest species, such as cheese tree (*Glochidion ferdinandi*) and lillypilly (*Acmena smithii*) are common and the understorey is dominated by ferns, such as soft bracken (*Calochleana dubia*) and maiden hair (*Adiantum aethiopicum*).



Blue Gum Forest at Rosemead Rd, Hornsby



Powerful Owls are often residents of threatened forests in Hornsby.
Photo: Brenden Lalchere



Blue Gum High Forest at Observatory Park Pennant Hills

Your local threatened communities

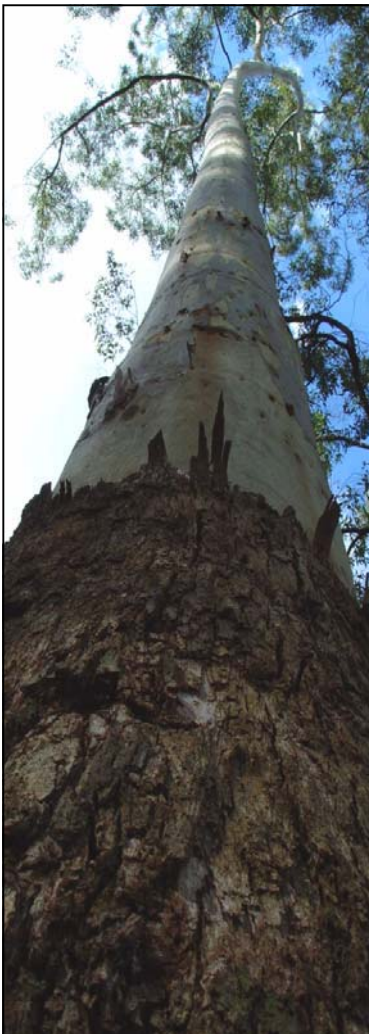
Only 37 ha of Blue Gum High Forest remains in Hornsby Shire, most of which is modified or degraded and is critically endangered. Often these areas consist of clumps of trees in urban landscapes, in less developed sites such as Council reserves, large backyards, creek lines and schoolyards. These sites are of natural heritage significance as they are remnants of past vegetation.

They contain genetic material indigenous to the area and provide habitat for native fauna including threatened species and endangered populations, in particular Gang-gang Cockatoos (right). They also form parts of corridors and urban habitat links and contribute to the landscape character of the suburb.



Blue Gum High Forest is found in many areas of Hornsby Shire including Epping, Beecroft, Hornsby, Pennant Hills and Thornleigh. Examples of Blue Gum Forest are found at Dog Pound Creek accessible via Wareemba Ave, Thornleigh and at Rosemead Rd, Hornsby.

Often the conservation value is overlooked due to their small size, the urban setting, the level of exotic vegetation or mown nature of the understorey. The appearance of the remnants to the community is often one of a weed infested patch rather than pristine looking bushland.



Sydney Blue Gum—*Eucalyptus saligna*

MAJOR THREATS TO BGHF REMNANTS:

- Property development leads to further fragmentation and increased nutrients
- Mowing and clearing understorey



Doodia aspera, a native fern, is often found in association with Blue Gums.

