

Flindersia australis

(Rutaceae)

Common name: Crow's ash.

Localities: Brisbane River Bank, Grandview Rd, Moggill State Forest, Rafting Ground, Upper Brookfield; widespread in our area.

Growth form: A tall and handsome tree to 40 m, producing a compact shape when grown in isolation. The bark is smooth and sheds in oval flakes.

Foliage: Leaves are pinnate and crowded towards the ends of the branches. Each leaf has 5-13 glossy leaflets up to 12 cm long, 4 cm wide.

Flowers and fruit: Flowers are white, in panicles, the petals about 6 mm long. Flowering is in spring. The fruit is a woody capsule to 10 cm long, the five boat-shaped valves covered in prickles. The fruit opens out on the tree to form a star-like structure, the valves remaining joined at the base.

Habitat: Occurs in both subtropical rainforest and dry rainforest, extending into eucalypt forest.

Propagation and Management: The seeds are papery and germinate readily when fresh, retaining their viability for about a year. Plants can also be propagated by transplanting suckers. Crow's ash is moderately fast growing, once established, and is easy to grow. It is adapted to most soils and tolerates full sun and light frosts.

General: Crow's ash is valued as a timber, especially for flooring, but little is available for harvesting nowadays. Other species of *Flindersia* in our area are *F. bennettiana* (Bennett's ash), *F. collina* (leopard ash), *F. schottiana* (bumpy ash) and *F. xanthoxyla* (yellowwood). All are handsome trees and well worth growing.

