

## *Gmelina leichhardtii*

(Verbenaceae)

- Common name:** White beech.
- Localities:** Kholo Creek; also at a few sites along Savages Rd.
- Growth form:** A large tree which tends to lose most of its leaves for a brief period in winter-spring.
- Foliage:** Leaves are simple, up to 18 cm long and moderately broad, tough in texture, with prominent veins on the lower surface, which is softly hairy, as also are the young shoots and petioles. Leaves on young plants have sparsely-toothed margins.
- Flowers and fruit:** The flowers are borne in panicles, and are bell-shaped, quite large and showy, white and purplish in colour. The fruit is round, blue, 12-15 mm in diameter.
- Habitat:** Occurs in subtropical rainforests.
- Propagation and Management:** Propagated from fresh seed. Easily grown and fairly quick-growing. Tolerates infertile soil, but requires good drainage.
- General:** White beech was one of the most sought-after timber trees in the rainforests and was extensively harvested in southeast Queensland. As a result, it is now uncommon in our area. The timber is excellent for carving. The fruit attract red-tailed black cockatoos and topknot pigeons.

