

The Wollemi Pine



The Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens displays one of the largest collections of Wollemi Pines in a public garden in Queensland.

The Wollemi Pine is a majestic conifer that grows up to 40 metres high in the wild with a trunk diameter of over one metre. It has unusual pendulous foliage with light apple green new tips in spring and early summer contrasting against the older dark green foliage.

Another unique feature is its pattern of branching with the mature foliage having two ranks of leaves along the branches. The bark is also distinct even from related species, looking very much like bubbling chocolate. The Wollemi Pine's closest living relatives are the Norfolk Island Pine, Bunya Pine and Hoop Pine.

Quick Facts

Claim to fame: One of the world's oldest and rarest trees

Scientific name:
Wollemia nobilis

Family: Araucariaceae

Relatives:
Kauri, Norfolk Island, Hoop, Bunya and Monkey Puzzle pines

First discovered:
In 1994, 200km west of Sydney in a rainforest gorge within the 500,000 hectare Wollemi National Park in the Blue Mountains by David Noble, a NSW National Parks and Wildlife Officer and avid bushwalker.

Age: The Wollemi Pine belongs to the 200 million year old Araucariaceae family

Oldest Known fossil:
90 million years

Wild population:
Less than 100 mature trees

Characteristics:
Conifer with attractive, unusual dark green foliage, bubbly bark and sprouts multiple trunks



Growth habit:
Fast growing in light, favours acid soils, and temperatures from -5 to 45C (23 to 113F). Trials in the USA and Japan have indicated that it will survive temperatures as cold as -12C (5F)

Size:
The largest wild Wollemi Pine in the rainforest gorge is 40m tall with a main trunk of 1.2m wide

Conservation: Royalties from sales of the Wollemi Pine to support conservation of the Wollemi Pine and other rare and endangered plant species

Reference: Wollemi Australia
www.wollemipine.com