

Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens



Photograph: Jenny Ryle

Photographs (above): Roger Thomas

Black She-oak

Allocasuarina littoralis

FAST FACTS

Tree	
Family:	Casuarinaceae She-oak
Size:	6m H x 3m W
Position:	Sunny
Soil:	Well drained
Flowers:	Late spring
Fruits:	Cones (Females)
Care:	Low maintenance

Sometimes mistaken for a pine tree, the **Black She-oak** (*Allocasuarina littoralis*) is an Australian native from the Ballarat area that will eventually grow into a graceful, upright tree with rough, dark bark and fine, soft, dark green 'foliage'.

Location: Black She-oaks like a sunny position. Allow room for it to fully grow.

Leaves: The fine, delicate 'foliage' provides light shade over summer and produces a gentle whispering sound in a breeze. The true leaves are minute scales surrounding each slender green stem.

Flowers: Flowers are inconspicuous, but in late spring you will notice an attractive fine dusting of tiny rust-coloured flowers amongst the dark green foliage.

Planting: Black She-oaks are quite tough and will grow well in your garden if planted in a hole not much larger than the pot within a few days of purchase. Give it a good ½ bucket of water as soon as you plant it and it should be fine after that.

Seed: If you have a female tree, after a few years it will produce lots of small woody cones scattered throughout the older branches. The cones are 1-2cm long and covered in rounded bumps which eventually spilt open to release a fine seed.

Propagation: If you want to grow your own Black She-oaks, dry cones can be picked and placed in a paper bag and left indoors for a few days. The tiny seed will be released and can be sprinkled on moist potting mix.