

# Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens



Photograph: Roger Thomas



Photographs (above): John Gregurke

## Drooping She-oak

### *Allocasuarina verticillata*

#### FAST FACTS

##### Tree

Family:	Casuarinaceae
	She-oak
Size:	8m H x 4m W
Position:	Sunny
Soil:	Well drained
Flowers:	Late Autumn
Fruits:	Cones (Females)
Care:	Low maintenance

An Australian native tree from the Ballarat area, **Drooping She-oak** (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) will grow into a somewhat rounded tree with rough dark bark and drooping, grey-green, needle-like 'leaves'.

**Location:** Plant in a sunny, well drained spot with room to for the tree to grow.

**Leaves:** Drooping She-oaks have fine, delicate 'foliage' that provides light shade over summer and produces a gentle whispering sound in a breeze. If you look closely, you will see that the true leaves are tiny scales arranged in circles around the slender drooping green stems.

**Flowers:** The flowers are inconspicuous but from late autumn through to early summer you will notice an attractive fine dusting of golden flowers amongst the grey-green foliage.

**Planting:** Drooping 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 rough surfaced, globular cones are 3-5cm long and will eventually open to release the fine seed.

**Propagation:** 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.