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Australian forest profiles

Callitris



Callitris trees are found only in Australia and New Caledonia with 13 of the 15 species found in Australia. Callitris trees are commonly called cypress pines because they are related to, and resemble, northern hemisphere cypresses. Although conifers, callitris trees are not true pines.

Australia has 2.0 million hectares of the Callitris forest type, which is 1.5% of Australia's total native forest area. This forest type typically grows in small patches in drier inland regions, but occasionally covers wide areas. Pure stands

of callitris are generally restricted to undulating or flat land with sandy soils, or to upland rocky areas that are protected from fire. Individual callitris trees are often present in Acacia, Casuarina and Eucalypt forests with a shrubby, grassy or herb-rich understory. Callitris is the only native forest type dominated by softwood tree species.

The name callitris is derived from the Greek words *kallos* (beauty) and *treis* (three) and refers to the arrangement of leaflets in whorls of three.



Stand of white cypress pines (*Callitris glaucophylla*)
Michael Ryan

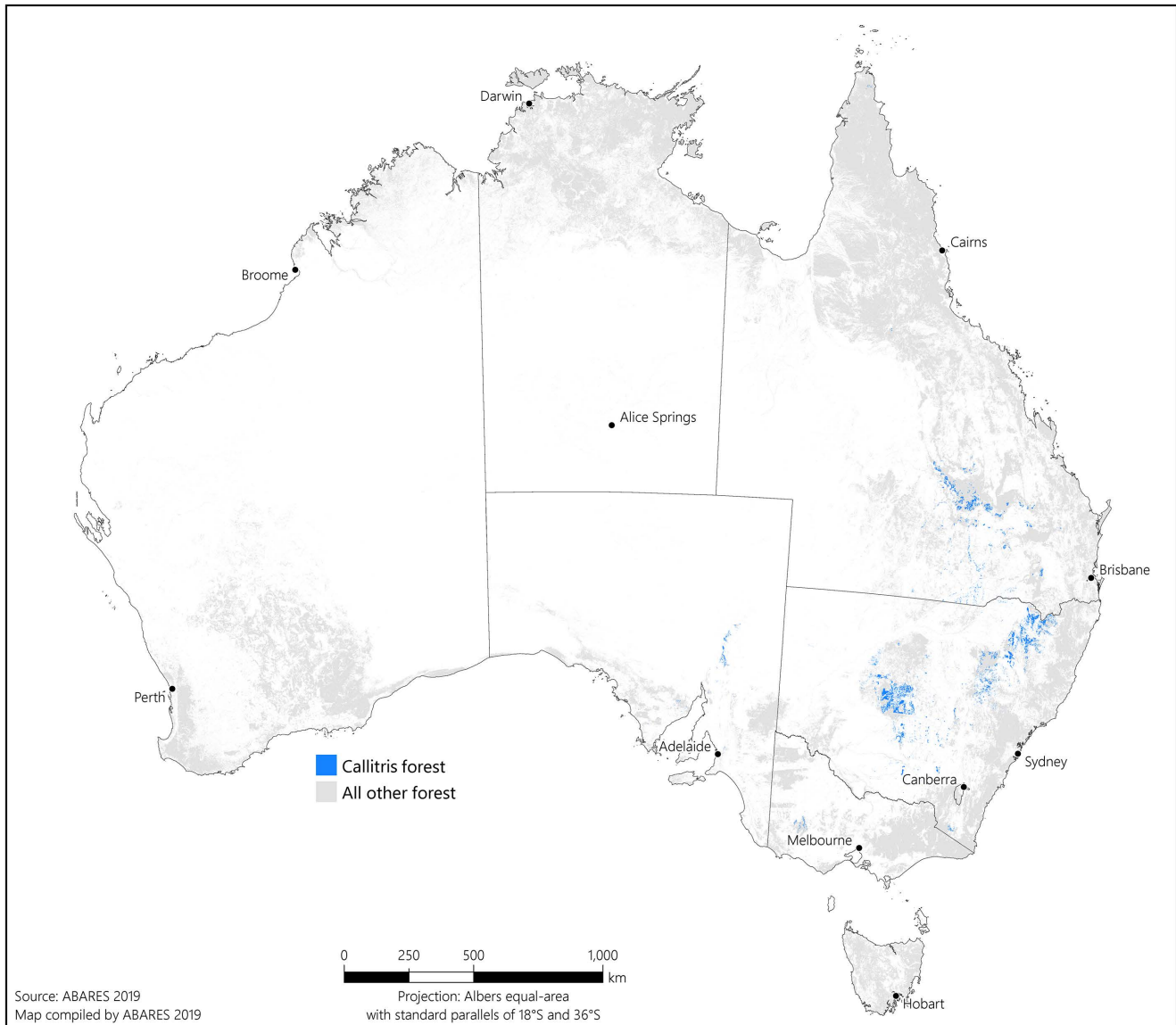
Distribution and ownership

Callitris forests occur in all states (Map 1). A total of 1.4 million hectares (69%) of the Callitris forest type is in New South Wales, mainly in the Central West and New England regions. Callitris forest also extends through Queensland's Darling Downs and Central regions. White cypress pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*) is widespread south of the Tropic of Capricorn, with extensive stands in inland southern Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Small stands of callitris trees are found in south-western Western Australia, including the Rottneest Island pine (*C. preissii*), which is endemic to the region.

A total of 0.7 million hectares (37%) of Callitris forest is on leasehold land, with a further 0.7 million hectares (35%) on private land (Table 1).

MAP 1 Distribution of Callitris native forest, 2018



[Open a high-resolution version of Map 1 that can be saved as a PNG file](#)

TABLE 1 Ownership of Callitris native forest, by state and territory, 2018 ('000 hectares)

Tenure	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas.	Vic.	WA	Australia
Leasehold forest	0	482	0	215	41	0	0	0	738
Multiple-use public forest	0	102	0	145	0	0	1	0	248
Nature conservation reserve	0	172	0	13	16	0.4	21	0.1	223
Other Crown land	0	62	0	6	0.2	0.1	0.2	0	68
Private forest	0	571	0	133	9	0.3	0.2	0	714
Unresolved tenure	0	4	0	16	0.1	0	0	0	20
Total	0	1,394	0	527	66	1	23	0.1	2,011

Note: Totals may not tally due to rounding. The six forest tenure categories are defined in *Australia's State of the Forests Report 2018*.

Source: ABARES (2019)

[Download Table 1 data as an Excel workbook](#)

Forest structure

A total of 1.1 million hectares (53%) of Callitris forest is open forest (Figure 1). Most species of callitris are medium-sized trees, and 1.8 million hectares (91%) of Callitris forest is medium height. Brush cypress pine (*C. macleayana*) can grow up to 50 metres high.

Native forest structural classes

Native forests are divided into three classes based on crown cover:

- **woodland forest** (20 to 50% crown cover)
- **open forest** (>50 to 80% crown cover)
- **closed forest** (>80 to 100% crown cover).

and three classes based on mature tree height:

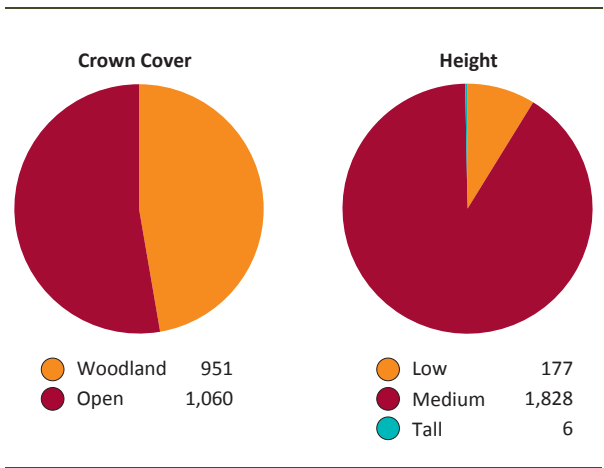
- **low** (2 to 10 metres)
- **medium** (>10 to 30 metres)
- **tall** (>30 metres).

Uses

Callitris timber is widely used for flooring, lining boards, weatherboards, interior joinery and cabinets, and fencing poles and posts. Some species of callitris, such as the Port Jackson pine (*C. rhomboidea*), have durable, insect-resistant wood.

Resins from callitris trees have traditionally been used by Indigenous Australians as an adhesive for attaching axe heads to handles, and barbs and tips to spears.

FIGURE 1 Structure of Callitris native forest, 2018 ('000 hectares)



Source: ABARES (2019)

[Download Figure 1 data as an Excel workbook](#)



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This is one in a series of profiles on Australia's major forest types. It has been compiled using information from the Australia's State of the Forests Report series. The latest report, *Australia's State of the Forests Report 2018*, and the profiles, are available at agriculture.gov.au/abares/forestsaustralia.

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