

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Celebrating 30 Years Since the Rediscovery of the Wollemi Pine: A Living Fossil and Conservation Triumph.

September 10, 2024 – Van Berkel Distributors proudly commemorates the 30th anniversary of the rediscovery of the Wollemi Pine, one of the world's oldest and rarest plants. This extraordinary species, dating back to the time of the dinosaurs, was believed extinct until its remarkable rediscovery in 1994 in a secluded rainforest canyon within the Greater Blue Mountains Area.

With fewer than 100 adult trees existing in the wild, the Wollemi Pine stands as a symbol of resilience and hope. Over the past three decades, extensive research and conservation efforts have been dedicated to safeguarding its survival. Van Berkel Distributors, holding global commercial propagation rights, successfully propagate and distribute over 10,000 plants annually, allowing individuals Australia wide to contribute to conservation efforts by growing their own Wollemi Pine.

Van Berkel Distributors invites members of the Horticultural Media Association Australia Inc. to join in celebrating this landmark anniversary and to share the story of the Wollemi Pine, a testament to the power of conservation and the enduring wonders of our natural world.

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30 YEARS OF THE
WOLLEMI PINE
~ DISCOVERED 1994 ~

MILLIONS OF YEARS IN THE MAKING

the
WOLLEMI
PINE



Millions of years in the making

Thought to be extinct and only known by fossil records the Wollemi Pine was rediscovered in 1994 in a remote part of the Wollemi National Park in the Blue Mountains approx, 200km west of Sydney, Australia.

The Wollemi Pine is one of the world's oldest and rarest plants dating back to the time of the dinosaurs, and belonging to the 200 million year old Araucariaceae family. Fossil evidence of the Wollemi Pine, or at least its ancestors, date back to the mid-Cretaceous, and possibly even the early Cretaceous period some 110 million years ago. There are also fossil records showing dinosaurs inhabiting Australia at the same time before their global extinction around 65 million years ago.

With less than 100 trees known to currently exist in the wild¹, the Wollemi Pine has now been the focus of extensive research to safeguard and ensure its survival for 30 years.



1. Only 46 adult trees and 43 juveniles remain in the original wild population. (<https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/plants-and-animals/wollemi-pine>)

“The discovery of the Wollemi Pine is the equivalent of finding a small dinosaur still alive on earth”

*Professor Carrick Chambers
Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney*





Original grove of Wollemi Pine in secret remote location in the Blue Mountains.

The chance discovery of the Wollemi Pine

On 10 September 1994, and in an event reminiscent of some of the greatest discoveries of modern history, a NSW National Parks Ranger by the name of David Noble stumbled upon perhaps one of the most important botanical finds of the century. While abseiling in the Wollemi National Park near Sydney, Noble encountered a canyon filled with large, unique looking pine trees that seemed prehistoric in nature.

Later identified as 'The Wollemi Pine', an ancient tree species believed to be extinct for millions of years, and with the rarity of the discovery being likened to finding a living dinosaur. The Wollemi dubbed the 'Dinosaur Tree' or 'Living Fossil' has quickly gained fame as a botanical marvel and one of the most significant finds of the past 120 years.

Soon after the discovery, the decision was made to keep the location of the trees to only a small number of people - a closely guarded secret to protect them from collectors, vandals and possible plant diseases. This is a policy that is still in place today.

Wollemi Pine seeds and cuttings were collected from the grove so a population could be established outside the canyon as an insurance policy against any disaster. The initial propagation was undertaken by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, until a commercial arrangement was established as Wollemi Australia (a partnership between Queensland's DPI Forestry, and a commercial Nursery) before its initial public release in 2006.



Wild Wollemi Pine population, growing upto 40m in height.



Wollemi Pine research site.

The Wollemi Pine was introduced to the world with an occasion befitting Australia's newest icon; a public exhibition was held at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, culminating in the international Sotheby's auction of the 'Collectors Edition' trees took place in October 2006. Several preview events showcasing the Wollemi Pine also took place in London, Frankfurt and Tokyo in the lead up to the Sydney based auction on October 23, 2006.

Each Collectors Edition tree could be traced back to its parent tree in the wild. There was less than 300 trees available as part of 148 lots for auction which ranged from single trees to an avenue of 20 trees from the same parent. Six groves of five trees were each dedicated to conservation organisations in Australia, New Zealand, the UK, Germany and Japan.

Van Berkel Distributors were originally tasked with shipping the Wollemi Pine to enthusiasts across Australia, the Van Berkel family have been intricately involved with the Wollemi Pine since its first public realisation back in 2006.

The family now proudly hold the rights to both the tree's propagation and the trademark 'The Wollemi Pine' globally, with distribution currently limited to Australia, the family hope to once again share this amazing tree with enthusiasts around the world.



The Wollemi Pine at a glance

The Wollemi Pine	One of the world's oldest and rarest trees.
Scientific Name	<i>Wollemia nobilis</i> .
Family	Araucariaceae.
Relatives	Kauri, Norfolk Island, Hoop, Bunya and Monkey Puzzle pines.
When Discovered	1994
Where Discovered	200km west of Sydney in a rainforest gorge within the Wollemi National Park in the Blue Mountains.
Discovered 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 trees known to exist.
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 45°C (23 to 113°F). Trials in the USA and Japan have indicated that it can survive temperatures as cold as -12°C (10.4 °F).
Size	The largest wild Wollemi Pine in the rainforest gorge is 40m tall with a main trunk of 63cm in width.



The characteristics of the Wollemi Pine

Foliage

The Wollemi Pine produces three types of foliage depending on its age and position on the tree. New juvenile frond-like foliage is apple-green and changes to a blue-green colour as the plant grows. Mature foliage is much more Jurassic-like, featuring two rows of leaves on the branches, not unlike the spines on a Stegosaur's back. In the colder months the foliage has a warm, bronze appearance.



Cones

Male and female cones are produced by the same tree on the tips of separate branches. Although precocious Wollemi Pines have developed both cones when approx. 10 years old, it is generally assumed that a Wollemi Pine will become sexually mature and display both cones between 12 and 15 years of age.



Coppicing

The Wollemi Pine has a habit of developing multiple stems, called 'coppicing', which may have evolved as a defence against drought, fire or rock fall in the steep canyons where it grows in the wild, thereby ensuring its survival. This means your Wollemi Pine will be naturally multi-stemmed giving it an attractive bushy form compared to its single stemmed conifer relatives.



Polar Caps

During the colder months the Wollemi Pine becomes dormant and its growing buds develop an attractive white waxy coating with ruby pink hues. This protects its growing tips and is thought to have helped it survive many ice ages. When spring arrives the caps melt away and the new growth will burst through.



Polar Caps

Bubbly Bark

The Wollemi Pine bark is also very distinct even from related species, looking very much like bubbling chocolate. This brown bubbly bark will form as the plant matures, from approximately 6 years of age



Bubbly Bark

Growth

In optimal conditions a young Wollemi Pine (up to 18 months of age) will grow up to half a metre each year, while a more mature plant may grow around one metre per year to a height of 10 to 15 metres – perhaps reaching a height of twenty metres during its lifetime if conditions are perfect. Medium to low light conditions, may cause growth slower growth.



Mature Trees

How to recognise a 'Certified' Wollemi Pine

It is important to recognise the official 'certified' Wollemi Pine symbol and look for it when purchasing a Wollemi Pine. Only by buying a 'certified' Wollemi Pine can you be assured that you are assisting to fund conservation efforts to ensure the ongoing survival of the Wollemi Pine.

As seeds from the wild population are difficult and dangerous to collect, and collection poses the threat of damage to the trees, propagation is being carried out vegetatively from young plants grown from the original seeds and cuttings from the Wollemi Pines in the wild. Ongoing research is also being conducted to study the viability of utilising micro propagation methods for commercial production.

Van Berkel Distributors has been exclusively licensed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney (RBGS) through NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to propagate and market the Wollemi Pine in Australia and internationally.

All Wollemi Pines grown and marketed by Van Berkel Distributors are identified by their authentication certificates, labelling and packaging bearing the registered Wollemi Pine logo. The Wollemi Pine logo is recognisable as the official branding of the The Wollemi Pine.

There is currently a patent pending on the Wollemi Pine to protect against unauthorised commercial propagation. Both the The Wollemi Pine and Fossil Symbol (pictured right) are registered Trade Marks[®] of Van Berkel Distributors Pty Ltd.



Certificate of Authenticity and Care Booklet



The Wollemi Pine – Product Offering

The Wollemi Pine is currently sold within Australia in 4 pot sizes, 150mm, 200mm, 300mm and 450mm potted plants. All plants sold are supplied with the certified authentication certificate and care booklet.



Wollemi Pine 150mm Pot
AUD \$99.00 RRP



Wollemi Pine 200mm Pot
AUD \$170.00 RRP



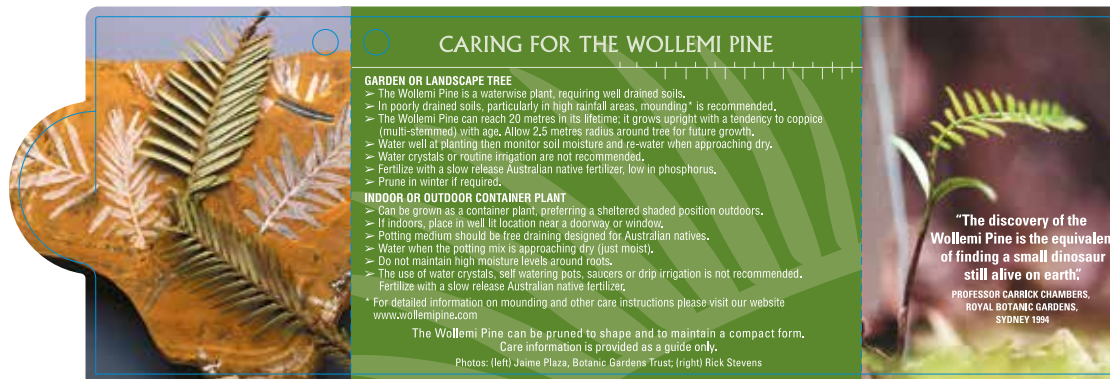
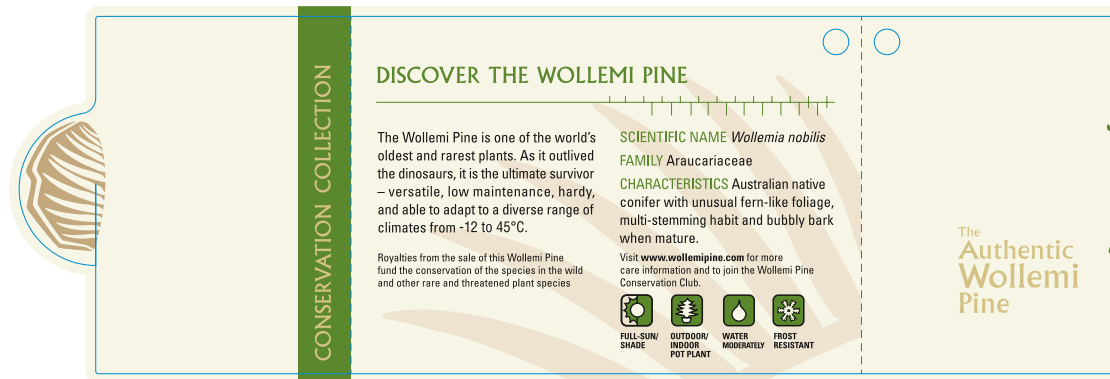
Wollemi Pine 300mm Pot
AUD \$499.00 RRP

Images shown are not to scale and is a representation only.

Also available in a 450mm Pot (Not pictured) – **Starting at AUD \$1700.00** – Price is based on size and age of the individual trees

The Wollemi Pine - Retail Product Presentation

All plants are supplied with branded product swing tags or pot tags.
Pot wraps as shown are available for 150mm & 200mm Wollemi pots.



Wollemi Pine product swing tags.



Wollemi Pine pot wraps

The Authentic Wollemi Pine

CONSERVATION COLLECTION

DISCOVER THE WOLLEMI PINE

The Wollemi Pine is one of the world's oldest and rarest plants dating back to the time of the dinosaurs. With less than 100 adult trees known to exist in the wild, the Wollemi Pine is now the focus of extensive research to safeguard its survival.

Assist in the conservation effort by growing your own Wollemi Pine and becoming part of one of the most dramatic comebacks in natural history.

Seedlings from the sale of this Wollemi Pine will help fund the conservation of the species into the future.

SCIENTIFIC NAME *Wollemi nobilis*
FAMILY Araucariaceae

CHARACTERISTICS Australian native conifer with unusual fern-like foliage, multi-stemmed habit and bubbly bark when mature.

Versatile, low maintenance, hardy and able to adapt to a diverse range of climates for -12 to 45°C.

FULL-SUN PLANT
 INDOOR OR OUTDOOR POT PLANT
 WATER MODERATELY
 FROST RESISTANT

Please register your Wollemi at www.wollemipine.com/register to receive your Certificate of Authenticity and 16 page Care Booklet by mail.

THE WOLLEMI PINE
www.wollemipine.com

The Authentic Wollemi Pine

"How many millions and millions of years ago, long before we had discovered this rare survivor from such an ancient past."

CARING FOR YOUR WOLLEMI PINE

GARDEN OR LANDSCAPE TREE

The Wollemi Pine is a waterwise plant, requiring well drained soils. In poorly drained soils, particularly in high rainfall areas, mounding is recommended.

The Wollemi Pine can reach 20 metres in its lifetime. It grows upright with a tendency to droop slightly as it matures. Allow 2.5 metres radius around the tree for future growth.

Water well when planting then monitor soil moisture and re-water when approaching dry.

Water crystals or routine irrigation are not recommended.

Fertilise with a slow release Australian native fertiliser, low phosphorus. Prune as winter if required.

INDOOR OR OUTDOOR CONTAINER PLANT

Can be grown as a container plant, preferring a sheltered shaded position outdoors.

If indoors, place in well lit location near a doorway or window.

Potting medium should be free draining designed for Australian natives.

Water when potting mix is approaching dry (not moist).

Do not maintain high moisture levels around roots.

The use of water crystals, self watering pots, saucers or drip irrigation is not recommended.

Fertilise with a slow release Australian native fertiliser.

"The discovery of the Wollemi Pine is the equivalent of finding a small dinosaur still alive on earth"

PROFESSOR IAN SCHUBERT
 ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS
 SYDNEY 2016

For detailed care instructions please visit www.wollemipine.com

The Authentic Wollemi Pine

Wollemi Pine product pot tags.

the WOLLEMI PINE

‘COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE’

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Wollie the Dino



Instore Promotion



“How marvellous and exciting
that we should have discovered
this rare survivor from such an
ancient past”

David Attenborough

Sir David Attenborough
Broadcaster and Natural Historian



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 **Van Berkel**
Distributors
Established 1953

