



Grey Mangrove Forest at Hays Inlet



Grey Mangrove Forest lining Hays Inlet

The Grey Mangrove

When you look at the mangrove forests of Hays Inlet you will notice they are dominated by one species *Avicennia marina* or the Grey Mangrove. This tree, a pioneer species, is the most widely distributed of all mangroves probably due to its tolerance of cooler climates and can be found on the coastlines of all of our states except Tasmania.

They tend to form the frontline of the forests on the seaward side of estuaries including Hays Inlet and are well adapted to coping with the tough conditions found on our estuary shorelines. They can cope with varying levels of salinity, exposure to tides, varying amounts of rainfall and can grow in mudflats, sand, reef flats and even in rocky embayments. They can do this because of a special root system comprised of peg roots which are also known as pneumatophores. These roots not only stabilize the mangrove in soft mud but are used to provide oxygen to the tree during low tide. The Grey Mangrove also has special glands in the underside of their leaves which exude excess salt from the plant.

Grey mangroves normally reach a height of 5 metres (can reach 10 metres in the tropical regions) with orange flowers and almond sized green fruit. This fruit matures into a floating seed pod which can survive in sea water for a significant amount of time and accounts for their wide distribution and ability to colonize new areas. They are a vital component in the stabilization of estuarine shorelines and thus extremely important to the stability of Hays Inlet, its wildlife and the surrounding habitats.



Grey Mangrove foliage with fruit



Grey Mangrove pneumatophores



Grey Mangrove seedling on tidal flats