

Cypress Pine

Callitris is a genus of coniferous trees native to Australia and New Caledonia, commonly known as **Australian Cypress** or **Cypress Pine**.

It is one of Australia's most commercially important native timber species, primarily for its unique properties, particularly its **natural resistance to termites** (white ants).

Here is a summary of the key information about **Callitris** timber:

1. Termite Resistance

- **Highly Resistant:** The heartwood of most commercial *Callitris* species, such as **White Cypress Pine** (*Callitris glaucophylla*), is classified as highly resistant to subterranean termites.
- **Mechanism:** This resistance is due to the presence of natural oils and resins (extractives) in the heartwood, which act as a repellent or toxin to the termites.
- **Durability:** This natural resistance means the heartwood generally does not require chemical treatment for termite protection, making it a popular choice for building applications.

2. Timber Properties

- **Classification:** Despite the common name "Cypress Pine," it is a **softwood** (conifer), but its wood density is exceptionally high for a softwood, rivaling many hardwoods.
- **Appearance:**
 - **Heartwood:** Varies from light yellow-brown to darker reddish-brown or streaky gold/brown.
 - **Sapwood:** Creamy white.
 - **Features:** It is characterized by small, tight, dark knots, which are often considered a decorative feature.
- **Texture and Grain:** Fine, even texture with a generally straight grain.
- **Aroma:** It has a distinctive, characteristic, and resinous scent (similar to camphor or pine).
- **Durability:** The heartwood is highly durable for above-ground use (Class 1) and moderately durable for in-ground use (Class 2).

3. Common Uses

Due to its durability, hardness, and natural termite resistance, *Callitris* timber is widely used for:

- **Structural:** House framing (in appropriate regions), flooring, and interior lining.
- **External:** Fencing posts, poles, and weatherboards.
- **Decorative:** Interior joinery, cabinets, and furniture.