

## MEET THE GIANTS

### Giant by the Pool *by Tiago Miranda*

Not just a mere mirage or a dream come true for ardent climbing arborists. This beast stands next to the most famous water pit that most Adelaideans from Eastern Suburbs wish for during hot days in summer. The photo doesn't do the actual trunk size, and it miscues the buttress looking from the opposite side. Covered by epicormic at the base, this veteran was long-standing before residents thought about a pool. Among other beasts, this tree allocates several natural hollows. Once up in the crown, silence has no other alternative but to whisper into the ears of those keen to hear nature saying, "welcome to this new world". Another notorious River Redgum, this time significant to the community as their eyes were wide open watching us climb.



*Clement scoping up / Source: T. Miranda 2020*



*Canopy aerial shot / Source: T. Miranda 2020*

It creates the dream landscape for skilful climbers willing to try something new with a diverse canopy and torturous limb growth. Most Eucalypts are flexible and robust at the junction but brittle if bends like a fishing rod. Anchor points are variable, and the smooth bark adds extra friction for limb walks if it is not too wet. Most of us love climbing trees like this, with a sea of options from the ground up. Hazelwood Park hosts a great selection of *E. camaldulensis* and commune walkers, and locals most appreciate them among their dogs. Familiar faces walk past us, knowing what we are up to after months of dead wooding and inspecting more than 300 hundred specimens in the park. Complaints are uncommon during this process.

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Minimal work is required every year to maintain a good amount of evenly distributed epicormic growth, giving birds an excellent opportunity to find a suitable hollow. A series of rainbow lorikeets, Adelaide rosellas and galah, are the most favourite to win a vacancy. From the tiniest hollow to the largest, a head popping out is common whilst gazing at the canopy. The view from the top, if in silence, could attract many territorial birds like noisy miners and magpies. A landscape is otherwise revealing how different a world can look like with bird's nests, beehives, damaged branches, weird growths, and walking minuscule people from the view above when this pool is usually packed during busy hours. Exploring a veteran crown like this makes you feel empowered and proves you right if you bought the right gear for the job.



*Zac and Clement / Source: T. Miranda 2020*



*Source: T. Miranda 2020*

Either climbing technique can be satisfying (SRT or MRT), as long as you can climb more than three trees a day. The history of the pool area is unknown, but Hazelwood Park stands among one of the oldest regions of free settlement in Adelaide. I assume this tree was there when Aboriginals were convinced that the sea was a bit far away. They would have to rely on possum meat and bird catching even though the witchetty grub is not so far-reaching—thinking that the Aboriginals would bother worrying that the grub tastes like almonds and when cooked becomes crisp like roast chicken. Not such a good reference from back in the days of hunter-gathering that whatever is available would dismiss the posh Westerner way of describing food.