

Merbau (Insia Bijuga) Information

Merbau is a very popular timber due to its durability and stability and is rated as class 1 above ground. The Janka rating is 8.5 with a Bal rating of 29. This makes Merbau a highly recommended and sought after timber for Decking, Screening and Cladding. The natural oils in this species help prevent cracking and splitting and it also holds up very well in extreme conditions.

Merbau has a tendency to “Bleed/Leach” tannins, it is recommended that the timber is kept off places where leaching can stain surrounding areas such as driveways and walkways. If it is delivered in these areas, you will need to organise to have the timber moved immediately or not placed in an area of risk.

Leaching occurs when Merbau is exposed to moisture and rain without a sealant or coating and can continue for months.

It is best to consult your hardware store or local coating trade centre to see what products can be used that will suit your needs to minimise leaching in addition to maintaining a regular oiling schedule. You can find this information on the specifications and recommendation guides on the products you decide to use.

To prevent or minimize bleeding or tannins from Merbau, you can follow these steps:

1. Determine an area that is appropriate and suitable to have the material dropped off for delivery. Make sure that the area that the materials are used is appropriate, that will not cause issues due to bleeding/leaching. It is your responsibility to have this area prepared to prevent any leaching or staining from the material. Some suggestions may be covering areas, moving the material instantly adding additional cover for protection to the delivery or other methods. You will individually be responsible for doing this even if you are not on site at the time of the delivery. – We take no responsibility for any bleeding/leaching that occurs on site.
2. Pre wash the material using a product such as a deck wash, complete on all sides making sure to follow the individual product instructions. Continue this until all tannins have leached out.
3. Pre-treatment: Apply a wood primer or sealer specifically designed to block tannins before applying any paint, oil or stain. This creates a barrier between the wood and the finished product.
4. Use a Quality Paint, Oil or Stain: Use high-quality paint, oil or stain with sufficient pigment to block tannins from bleeding through. Look for products labelled as stain-blocking or tannin-blocking.

5. Multiple Coats: Apply multiple coats of primer, paint, oil or stain as needed to ensure thorough coverage and sealing of the wood surface.

6. Regular Maintenance: Keep the Timber well-maintained by inspecting it periodically for signs of tannin bleed, fading, wear of coating or other issues. Address any problems promptly to prevent them from worsening.

7. Proper Ventilation: Ensure proper ventilation around the cladding to allow moisture to escape, which can help reduce tannin bleed and stability of Timber.

Cleaning Tannin Stains

First check with specialty cleaning supply business on their recommended solutions for cleaning depending on the surface to be cleaned or if the below suggestions are suitable.

1. Mild Soap and Water: For light staining, mix mild soap with water and gently scrub the affected area with a soft brush or cloth. Rinse thoroughly with clean water afterward.

2. Oxalic Acid Solution: For more stubborn stains, you can use a solution of oxalic acid, following the manufacturer's instructions carefully. This can help to remove tannin stains effectively.

3. Bleach Solution: In severe cases, a diluted bleach solution (1 part bleach to 4 parts water) can be used to lighten tannin stains. Test in an inconspicuous area first and rinse thoroughly after application.

4. Pressure Washing: If the stains are extensive, consider using a pressure washer with a mild detergent solution. Be cautious with pressure washing to avoid damaging the wood.

This is your own individual resistibility to ensure that the method you use is appropriate to your needs and other surroundings that could be effected. We recommend doing small test batches and consulting a professional.

Always wear appropriate protective gear such as gloves and goggles when working with cleaning solutions, and follow safety instructions provided by product manufacturers.