

Unbeleafable: tree buff twigs to record-setting ironbark



Derek McIntosh with what he believes to be Australia's largest grey ironbark tree.

Picture: PETER KELLY

PENELOPE BRADLEY

BELLA VISTA: AUSTRALIA'S largest recorded grey ironbark has called Bella Vista home for about 200 years, says tree enthusiast Derek McIntosh.

Mr McIntosh, founder of the National Register of Big Trees, has gone out on a limb for the tree, listing it as a new national record. The eucalypt, which soars 30m, has a canopy of 25m and is 5m wide, was spotted at Bella Vista Farm by the Manly resident while on a trip to the northwest to visit his daughter.

The register, founded by Mr McIntosh after retiring from a career in real estate, takes its inspiration from America's big tree register. Mr McIntosh said the register, which started in 2009, has prompted people to look within their own community for Australia's largest trees. At 320

What is the national register?

- Listing the largest trees within their species, the on-line register works to a point system, where points are awarded for width, height and crown spread.
- To check out some of Australia's biggest trees or even nominate a tree for the register go to nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au.

points on the register, Bella Vista's botanic beauty rockets above the second largest grey ironbark recorded on the register in Batemans Bay, which sits at 230 points. Comparing the experience to savouring the best bits of an indulgent dessert, Mr McIntosh took his time getting to the towering ironbark. "I stopped over to see a row of bunya pines which weren't really that big," he said.