



Lachie McKenzie, Edge Tracker 487, Melbourne VIC

Here's another beautifully built example of DIY composite boat building – Lachie has done a gorgeous job on this Edge Tracker 487 putting together an outstanding example of the home boat builder's craft that exceeds even professional standards, such is the TLC he's shown – not to mention a great deal of boat building skill – in the creation of a read head-turner. To put this into another perspective – you can purchase all the materials for this boat from BMD – everything except the actual finishing material (because there are so many choices in the finishing process - but they usually only cost a couple of hundred bucks at the most) but the kit with everything you need to build the boat is only \$2,400 - so call it \$2,750 with a urethane finish.

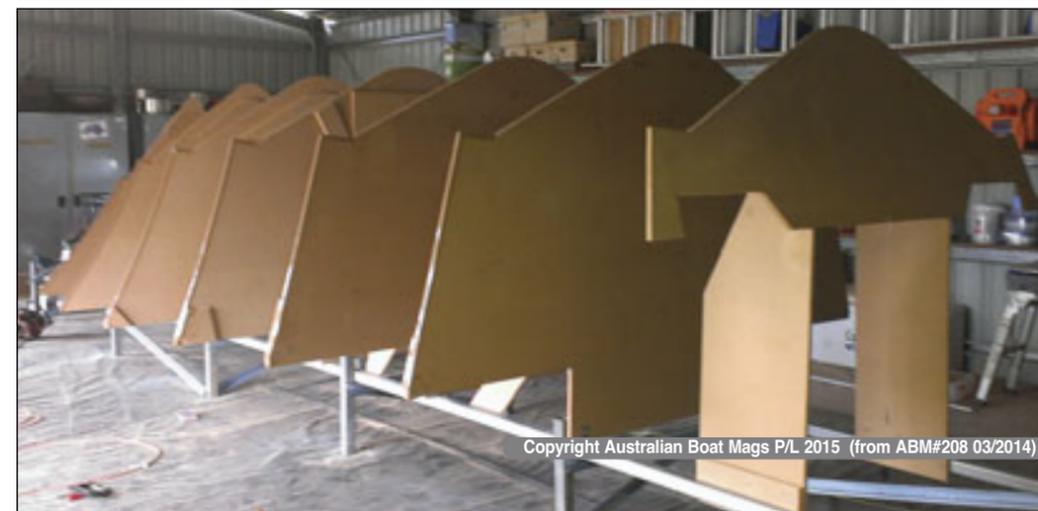


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Lance Boardman, Sea Strike 16, Auckland NZ

Another Sea strike 16, this time being built by a Kiwi family, and they're doing a nice job of it too, with very nicely defined hull lines and shape, and a high standard of finish that reflects a lot of skill and care in the build process. Not that it's that hard technically – it just requires a little more patience than some people normally use - but the end finish is actually determined (largely) at the rubbing back stage.



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Les Robinson, Tournament 24, Doomadgee, Far North Qld

One of the biggest boats in the BMD range is the awesome Tournament 24 - this one being built way up in the Gulf Country at Doomadgee where apart from cyclones, the wet season and impassable roads, Les has a beautiful workshop set-up and he's building one of the finest DIY projects you'll ever find in Australia. We'll be keeping an eye on this one (er, that is when the water around his shed goes down!) but we wish Les all the best through cyclone season because it is a worry when you're up in that part of the world, where Mother Nature can be pretty brutal at times. Mind you, what an incentive, just imagine working this rig out to Sweers, or Mornington - let alone going up to Borooloola and working from the McArthur River out to the Vanderlins. Dream time stuff, that's for sure.



Mark & Debbie Bowdidge, Tropic 14, Brisbane QLD

Debbie Bowdidge rests on the gunwale of their Tropic 14 which is the same boat featured in the video on page 59 – gotta love Mark's choice of music but he's an excitable sort of a bloke and does like his hard stuff! Oh, he's also not a bad boat builder, although we suspect Debbie does the really serious work that requires a women's greater skill and knowledge! Onya Deb . . .



F&B TV:
 (Tablet/Phone users: If video does not play, press here to change formats)



Video of Mark & Deb Bowdidge's Tropic 14

Gary & Kerry Peters, Magnum 10, Albany West Australia *This is a sweet little boat for two where there is simply no need for a bigger craft to fish estuaries or rivers comfortably, safely and enjoyably – with a little*





Patrick Kerrison, Magnum 10, Tasmania

Here's another view of the Magnum 10 - this one is in Tasmania, again showing just how simple, how practical and how power efficient the Magnum is for two people – there's no point having a boat bigger than it needs be, all it does is cost more to build, cost more to run, needs a bigger trailer and so on. The trick is to identify the type of fishing you want to do in your area (especially if you are in retirement mode) and build accordingly as they have done right here.

Peter Cocking, Sea Strike 18, Denmark, West Australia

On the other hand, Peter has developed a much bigger craft here, the Sea Strike 18, and he's doing a superb job on this bluewater fisherman too. With a Kit cost of around \$4650, plus freight if you live in WA like Peter, this is a fantastic investment in a fishing boat that will serve Peter well for many, many years.



Paul Farley, Sea Strike, 16 off (mainly) One Tree Island, Queensland

We featured this craft some months ago in the magazine and raised many eyebrows at the time – it's going to happen again because this is a beautifully built boat that really stands out from the crowd – not just because of its striking colour scheme or excellent build quality but because it's such a damn nice package - and with a 70hp 4-stroke Yamaha, it doesn't get much better. On the (right) they're just loading it back onto the barge that's bringing it back from One Tree Island on the Barrier Reef – not a bad trip, eh?





Peter Turpin, Mushulu 12, Sydney NSW

Peter's time clock had clicked past the 80 year mark when he built this beautiful Mushulu 12 in Sydney, and he's been using it happily ever since, proving that age is no barrier to DIY enthusiasm, it just simply means you've got more time to do an even better job! Well, that's the theory, and Peter has certainly put it into practice with a very high standard of finish on this extremely practical Mushulu.

Phil Hadland, 5.2m Cruise Control, Perth WA

Another Cruise Control, this time from WA, where even under wraps of the fibreglass cloth, you can see and admire the beautiful hull shape of this craft. It's worth noting that in the editor's humble opinion, we don't have a production hull of this class and calibre in Australia at the moment and it's not really all that surprising that it's been picked up by so many experienced DIY boat builders. This is a boat that really should be available in normal GRP production, but what the heck – for around \$6,400 you can buy all of the materials you need to build this entire craft - see the pic of Greg Hoffman's boat on Page 54 to see the [nearly] finished version).



Tom Mason, Mushulu 12, Sydney NSW

You've got to love this, haven't you? It's the classic Aussie backyard boat building project – right down to the ladder frame across the building stock! Tom Mason might have a fairly simplistic boat shed, but crikey what a beautiful job he's made of his Mushulu 12



Paulownia Timber

An extraordinary boat building timber that has been grown in China for hundreds - *if not thousands* - of years, is now carefully grown in unique Australian plantations and currently finding great favour with DIY boatbuilders and surfboard manufacturers, not to mention a host of other applications.

Australia's acknowledged expert in this field, David Evans, explains how this unusually light, resilient timber made its way into our lives . . .

“My involvement with Paulownia began when I was asked by a client for whom I had been building and shop fitting over a 15 year period, to make some plantation shutters for his new home in Parkdale, Victoria.

I did not wish to use cedar as this was commercially available in shutters and very hard to compete against without setting up a major enterprise.

We experimented with pine and craft wood to set us apart from what was already on the market with no success at all.

It was then suggested to me and my client to try this new imported timber called Paulownia (or commonly called Kiri, which is Japanese for Paulownia) and was imported into W.A from China mostly for boating purposes, where Kiri had become known in the boating world almost as a guarantee of old growth, knot free, pristine timber.

I laughed at the first sample of this timber I received, and to prove its poor quality, I submerged it in water for 3 days, but much to my amazement it did not swell, and after cutting it in half, I realised it had not absorbed any water at all.

It had no oils, saps or gum, and being a light blonde colour, made it ideal to go up against the traditionally used cedar.

We played with the timber and the shutters for nearly 12 months to master the painting and manufacturing process before setting up Port Phillip Plantation Shutters in March 2003, and entering the market place with our new, unheard of timber, *Paulownia*.

We then undertook research to establish why most people wanted to paint their beautiful cedar shutters, and soon established home-makers no longer wanted to see red coloured timber (as it was going out of vogue) so we introduced a stained colour range not possible to match with cedar timber. This seemed to be well accepted, but



Just a couple of ol' tree huggers, eh? Partners Tony Ferris and David Evans with one of the 9,000 Paulownia trees at Tony's Coffs Harbour plantation.

still the staining and polishing process was far beyond our expertise.

We almost tossed the towel in when we had a call from Orange in western NSW, to place an order for stained shutters which we had to decline. This was due to the associated problems of staining and top coating, and the delivery interstate of fully assembled shutters with severe damage almost guaranteed on every delivery. Then we'd have to try and match colour batches to colours from memory that

had been produced several weeks before. The whole process was just fraught with problems.

Having explained this to the client his reply was "Well, send them to me in a raw timber unassembled, and I can stain and assemble them myself . . ."

With a little thought, the raw timber shutter kit was born. This enabled the client to have the colour they required, in the finish they required and safe in the knowledge that there was plenty of finish coats and were able to recoat to another colour should it be necessary. Delivery of the shutter kit became almost indestructible in smaller, tightly packed parcels.

Around this time, the imported timber from China began to be over-harvested and the quality deteriorated to an unacceptable level, so we looked within Australia and found Coffs Harbour Paulownia Plantation.

They had invested large amounts of money in China to see how they had cultivated Paulownia for nearly 1000 years, and the resulting information has really paid for itself.

Together we travelled around Australia and visited most of the commercially viable plantations and came back very disillusioned about the future of Paulownia grown in Australia. Out of the 1 million odd trees we found, it seemed that only about 9% were ever likely to be of a harvestable size.

Unfortunately people were too trusting of the amazing claims of what the trees could produce and the time span



Russel Mason, Sportzmaster 19, Cocos Islands WA *If you live out on the edge of the Indian Ocean, you can't just rock down to the local marine dealership and buy a boat – so Russell decided to build his own, and he picked one of the writer's favourite models in the BMD range, to do it. He's progressing really well with the craft, and we're seriously hoping he'll invite ABM across to the Cocos for the launching of this magnificent craft.*

Scot Lee, Pro Tournament 21
When you build a boat this big you need a fairly big space, but Scott has got that aplenty, and doesn't it look a treat! It's just about ready to turn up the right way after all that hard work finishing and prepping the hull. Although this looks like a 16, just check the height of the freeboard amidships on the right hand side of the photograph, this will give you some idea of the real scale of this very big 21 footer. A magnificent boat – note the chine flats down at the transom for a combination of terrific stability and early lift. Good stuff.



required.

What we now know is that Paulownia trees need to be planted out almost 3 times the given distances; they rely heavily on huge amounts of water to flourish - but died ever so quickly if the roots remained in water for very long.

They require very well drained soil, and thrive in the warmer more humid areas and yet can tolerate very cold (even snow) for short periods.

Originally in China the Paulownia was referred to as the 'money tree' with the story relating back to when a daughter was born, Dad would plant a Paulownia tree which, when she was ready to marry, the tree would be large enough to be harvested to pay for the wedding.

The term 'Money tree' was adopted in Australia with a different meaning in that it grew so fast that huge returns were imminent within 10 years.

I think that the Paulownia investors failed to realise that they were not pine trees where once they were planted, you merely returned in 10 years to collect your fortune.

Investors didn't appreciate Paulownia plantations were more like a vineyard to look after, needing closely scrutinised pruning, regular fertilizing and watering, and had to be kept weed free.

It has been said on the internet that the best climate to grow Paulownia successfully is the central coast of NSW, and from our travels, we were quite amazed with the noticeable differences in the trees.

Up around Kingaroy they seemed to grow with a more dominant taper from bottom to top, and over in WA they seem to have a bend in the trunk more than elsewhere.

We found the Paulownia timber to be very stable in high humidity, direct sun and ideal for external use in alfresco areas, and privacy screens around spars and gazebos.

We were then approached by some of the bigger names in the surfing world, who'd heard about Paulownia's application for timber surf boards due to its unique quality of not sucking water and being even lighter than cedar.

Balsa is lighter than Paulownia but it also is very absorptive and needs to be sealed in fibre glass to remain dry and buoyant, thus adding to the weight.

Due to Paulownia's non-absorption quality we are able



Never one to miss the chance to wave the Paulownia flag (v. subtle, Dave!) Evans is building a BMD Riptide 457 using the Paulownia strip plank core. "Apart from getting a long overdue fishing boat - it means I can talk first hand to customers anywhere about the process, how it works, and what they need - and I'm really enjoying the build!"



David Evans and his wife Sue in the special Paulownia mill in Coffs Harbour, NSW.

to seal our boards with linseed oil and gum turpentine adding virtually no weight at all and creating a great saving in construction and repair costs.

A few years ago, we were contacted by Mark Bowdidge Marine Designs (RINA) about the use of this relatively new (to Australia, at least) Paulownia timber, so we organised tests with the University of Queensland to satisfy the timber qualities for water craft in commercial (Survey) situations, and the results were outstanding, allowing the use of Paulownia as either a core material or timber in its own right. This can only be said of the Paulownia from Coffs Harbour, as this was the only timber tested.

We now have 9,000 of Australia's biggest and tallest trees to ensure an ongoing supply of the best Paulownia Australia has to offer and to guarantee the continued quality.

In fact, Paulownia Timber Supplies Australia is the only known forest to have a substantial supply of timber into the future from the tallest and largest trees, and have on site, a saw mill dedicated to cutting

Paulownia trees, a water treatment plant and kiln to dry the timber to 12% moisture content.

Paulownia grows with a natural twist in the trunk and contains great spring when cut and a lot of the milling process is unique to Paulownia and should only be handled by experienced mill personal.

Paulownia Timber Supplies Australia also has a outlet and show room in Victoria-head office of Port Phillip Plantation Shutters Pty Ltd, open 6 days a week for the public to experience the feel of the timber, and view the many uses of it.

We are registered members of the Australia Made campaign.

ABM

For more informations, price lists, supplies, etc, contact **David Evans**, Port Phillip Plantation Shutters,
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Nathan Very, Cashmere 27, Brisbane QLD

Wow, you've got to admit this is a seriously awesome bit of kit, isn't it? 27 feet of saturated Paulownia being loaded onto the semi for its shift down to Brisbane. Would you believe the hull here only weighs around 450kg – such is the strength and lightness of this superb boat building process. This is going to be an extraordinary craft and we can't wait for it to become more advanced.

