



# Monaro Timber News

The monthly newsletter for people who love timber

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## Decking season is here.

Most people nail decking boards in place for two reasons. One is that it is the quickest way to fix a decking board down and the other reason is that many don't consider the options. Nails are certainly fast, especially if you are using a gun. If you choose to nail then you should use proper nails for the job as decks are a high stress area and as the boards move about in the extremes of temperature and humidity the nails will have to work hard to hold the boards in place. Using the best decking nails can still be inadequate sometimes, especially if you are fixing into treated pine joists. Pine doesn't grip the nails as well as hardwood does and they can let go.

What are the options? I believe a good decking screw is hard to beat. Fixed into a kiln dried joist they will pretty much be there for life. Yes, you will probably need to pre drill both the decking boards and the joists which will take a little longer but you won't be out on the decking banging down nails that keep popping up. If you counter sink them properly you will be able to sand the deck from time to time to freshen it up if you wish. Most nails sit slightly proud so future sanding isn't an easy option. I prefer to use a square drive ribbed stainless screw and into hardwood 50mm in length is quite sufficient. You can pick up these screws from Specialty Fasteners but ask for the 304 grade. If you get the 316 grade expect to pay around three times the price. I believe the 316 grade is for marine use, overkill on a deck. The square drive is less likely to chew out when they are driven in and they look good. On a 64mm deck one screw per joist is sufficient. On 86mm one will work but two is better and on the super wide decking boards such as the 140mm Spotted Gum then two screws per joist is a must.

While we are on the subject of decks you have probably gathered I'm not a big fan of treated Pine. I would NEVER use it for decking boards and can't think of many applications I would like to use it for in the structure. Hardwood or Cypress are, in my opinion, far superior. We carry a number of kiln dried hardwood options which can be oiled, with Organoil Decking Oil of course, to match your decking boards. No painting!!

We also keep dry laminated Merbau posts which look brilliant oiled up. Need steps, we have KD hardwood in several species including Blackbutt, Blue Gum, Spotted Gum and Silvertop Ash. It will be structurally graded to either F27 or F17 which is significantly stiffer than Pine.

There are many material options when building a deck and it's well worth thinking about more than just the boards on the top. And Builders, don't automatically assume your client wants the cheapest option. From my experience the vast majority of people want value for money and sometimes that means spending a little more initially to get the full long term benefit. If you want to look at some of the options I have discussed please feel free to drop by anytime.

## Bowl Blanks.

If you do any wood turning you might like to check out our range of bowl blanks. We have a number of species in pre cut and waxed rounds from 25mm thick to 150mm thick and up to around 400mm in width. They have been cut from dry material in species such as Camphour Laurel, Red Cedar, White Cedar, Huon, She Oak and more. I have just ordered another pallet load so stocks are very good. Bowl blanks also make very good Christmas presents for the wood turner in your family.

## Timber Specials

Last month we let you in a few specials we had going. We cleaned out the shed quite well but found a few more things that need to go in the process.

Pencil Cedar 25mm. This American timber has a range of red / brown colours with distinct sappy edges. Easy to work and polishes well. Normally \$4500/m<sup>3</sup> but now only \$3100/m<sup>3</sup>.

Fijian Cedar. 150 x 38. Much like Pacific Maple. Easy to work. Normally \$3000/m<sup>3</sup> but now only \$2100/m<sup>3</sup>.

Satin Box. Extremely rare, only a few boards of 38mm left. Going out at \$2800/m<sup>3</sup>.

Blackwood shorts, up to 1.0m long at only \$4000/m<sup>3</sup>

We need some space so come in and negotiate!

Cheers

*Shaun*

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