

Eucalyptus apiculata

Narrow-leaved mallee ash

Classification

Eucalyptus | Eucalyptus | Eucalyptus | Strictae | Irregulares

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus apiculata R.T.Baker & H.G.Sm., *Research Eucalypts* 198 (1902).

T: Berrima, NSW, 10 May 1899, *J.J.Fletcher s.n.*; syn: K, NSW; Mittagong, NSW, 29 July 1901, *J.J.Hook 108*; syn: K.

E. laophila L.A.S.Johnson & Blaxell, *Telopea* 4: 256 (1991). T: NSW, Central Tablelands, Wolgan Gap, 12 April 1953, *L.A.S.Johnson s.n.*; holo: NSW 27182.

Description

Slender **mallee** to 6 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

Bark smooth, cream, grey, brown or green.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stem rounded or slightly square in cross-section, scabrid on lower internodes; juvenile leaves opposite, sessile and amplexicaul for 3 or 4 nodes, then alternate, petiolate, narrowly lanceolate to linear, to 16 cm long, 0.8–2 cm wide, base tapering, glossy, dark green.

Adult leaves alternate, petiole 0.3–1 cm long; blade narrowly falcate to lanceolate to linear, 3.5–11 cm long, 0.3–0.7 cm wide, base tapering evenly to petiole, margin entire, concolorous, glossy, green, venation very acute or side-veins obscure, sparsely reticulate, intramarginal vein well removed from margin, oil glands island.

Inflorescence axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.5–1 cm long, buds 7 per umbel, pedicels 0.3–0.6 cm long. **Mature buds** obovoid, 0.5–0.8 cm long, 0.4 cm wide, warty, scar absent, operculum conical and apiculate, stamens irregularly flexed, anthers reniform to cordate, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscing by confluent slits, style long, locules 3 or 4, the placentae each with 2 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

Fruit on pedicels 0.2–0.6 cm long, cup-shaped, urceolate, or barrel-shaped, 0.7–1.0 cm long, 0.6–1 cm wide, disc descending, valves 3 or 4, enclosed.

Seeds pale to mid brown, 1–1.8 mm long, pyramidal or obliquely pyramidal, dorsal surface smooth, hilum terminal.

Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10): cotyledons reniform; stems rounded to square in cross-section, densely warty (feel scabrid); leaves sessile, opposite, discolorous, elliptic and held horizontally for lowest ca 4 or 5 nodes, then becoming petiolate, alternate, narrowly lanceolate, 6.5–16 cm long, 0.8–2.2 m wide, base tapering, concolorous, glossy, green.

Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in January, March, October and December.

Notes

A green-leaved mallee ash endemic to New South Wales, of the Central Tablelands on sandstone-derived soils from east of Rylstone south to Berrima.

E. apiculata has linear leaves which distinguish it from *E. stricta*, which has narrowly lanceolate leaves, and clearly from *E. burgessiana*, which has lanceolate leaves. The green-leaved mallee ashes grade into each other in leaf dimensions, and each of the three species recognised here, *E. apiculata* (leaves to 0.7 cm wide), *E. stricta* (leaves to 1.6 cm wide) and *E. burgessiana* (leaves to 2.5 cm wide), have synonyms that reflect this gradient but are scarcely applicable taxonomically.

Eucalyptus apiculata belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Eucalyptus* section *Eucalyptus* series *Strictae*, because of a combination of characters: mallee habit with smooth bark, alternate, green juvenile leaves, adult leaves held erect and with acute side-veins and little or no visible reticulation, single axillary inflorescences, the buds in clusters of sevens, with buds having only one operculum and reniform anthers, ovules in 2 rows, and ± pyramidal seeds. Within series *Strictae*, *E. apiculata* is one of six closely related species all with leaf oil glands that are irregular in outline (subseries *Irregulares*); the others are *E. dendromorpha* (a partly rough-barked tree with clavate buds in sevens); *E. triflora* (a small ± smooth-barked tree with oblong buds in threes or sevens); *E. stricta* and *E. burgessiana*, which differ as described above;



and *E. langleyi*, which has angular branchlets and adult leaves to 5 cm wide.

E. laophila, based on the data presented by Hill & Johnson (1991), scarcely differs from *E. apiculata*, overlapping almost completely in adult leaf, bud and fruit dimensions. We therefore place it in synonymy.

Origin of Name

Eucalyptus apiculata: Latin *apiculatus*, apiculate, ending abruptly in a point, referring to the leaves.

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