

Corymbia ptychocarpa subsp. *ptychocarpa*

Swamp bloodwood, Spring bloodwood

Classification

Corymbia | Rufaria

Nomenclature

Corymbia ptychocarpa (F.Muell.) K.D.Hill & L.A.S.Johnson, *Telopea* 6: 250 (1995) subsp. *ptychocarpa*

Eucalyptus ptychocarpa F.Muell., *J. Linn. Soc., Bot.* 3: 90 (1859). T: Northern Territory, Gulf of Carpentaria, 22 July 1856, *F.Mueller s.n.*; holo: K.

Description

Tree to 20 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

Bark rough to the small branches, thick, fibrous and fissured to tessellated, brown to grey-brown.

Branchlets lack oil glands in the pith; smooth.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stems rounded to square in cross-section, smooth; juvenile leaves always petiolate, opposite or becoming alternate, orbicular to elliptical or oblong, eventually becoming ovate, 6–30 cm long, 7–13 cm wide, base lobed to rounded, apex rounded and apiculate or broadly pointed, green, smooth.

Adult leaves sub-opposite to alternate, petioles 1.5–4 cm long; blade broadly lanceolate, 11–46 cm long, 2.7–13 cm wide, base tapering to petiole or rounded to truncate, margin entire, apex rounded and apiculate or pointed, discolorous, dull or glossy, green, smooth, side-veins greater than 45° to midrib, reticulation very dense, intramarginal vein close to margin or apparently absent (contiguous with margin), oil glands small, scattered, one per areole or sometimes not visible.

Inflorescence terminal compound, peduncles angular, scurfy, 1–6 cm long, buds 7 per umbel, pedicels 1–3.4 cm long. **Mature buds** obovoid to pyriform, 1.3–2.4 cm long, 1.1–1.8 cm wide, sharply longitudinally ribbed, white to pink and scurfy, scar absent (both opercula shed together at flowering), operculum shallowly rounded to bluntly conical, stamens inflexed, all fertile, anthers oblong, dorsifixed, versatile, dehiscing by longitudinal slits, style long and straight, stigma blunt and ? long-papillose, locules (4)5, the placentae each with ca 5 somewhat obscure ovule rows. Flowers pale creamy yellow, pink or red.

Fruit pedicellate (pedicels 0.5–2.5 cm long), barrel-shaped, 3.2–5.5 cm long, (2.2)2.6–4.5 cm wide, longer than wide, with 7–9 prominent sharp longitudinal ribs, disc descending, valves (4)5, enclosed.

Seeds brown, (11)14–17 mm long, ellipsoidal with terminal wing, hilum ventral.

Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10): cotyledons reniform; stems ± rounded in cross-section, setose with bristle-glands at least for 10 nodes; leaves always shortly petiolate (0.2–0.8 cm), opposite for at least 10 nodes, ovate to elliptical or oblong, 3.8–10.5 cm long, 1.5–4 cm wide, base rounded or slightly lobed, apex blunt or sometimes slightly emarginate, margin entire or subcrenulate, dull, green, discolorous, setose.

Flowering Time

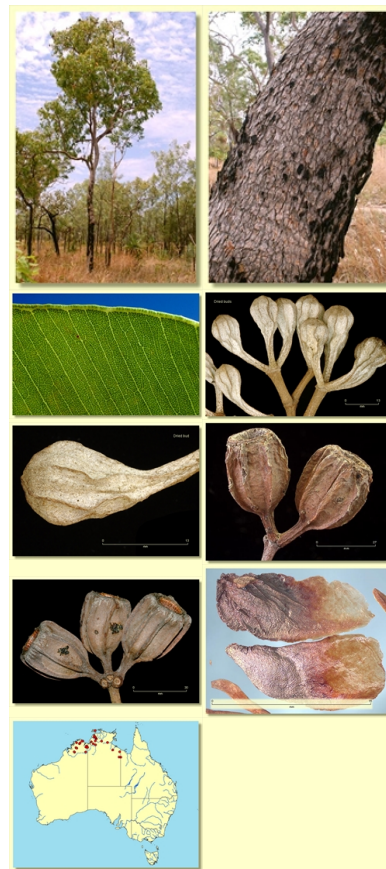
Flowering has been recorded in February, March, June, September, October, November and December.

A popular ornamental tree widely planted in parks and gardens in northern Australia.

Notes

Corymbia ptychocarpa is a bloodwood tree species widespread from the western Kimberley region of Western Australia east to the Top End of the Northern Territory extending further east to Doomadgee in far north-western Queensland, preferring habitats around springs, lagoons and along creeks. It has extensive rough brownish fibrous to tessellated bark, a green crown of smooth petiolate discolorous adult leaves, scurfy buds and large cylindrical to barrel-shaped fruit. Flower colour may be red or shades of pink to creamy white.

There are two subspecies distinguished by the degree of ribbing of the buds and fruit.



C. *ptychocarpa* subsp. *ptychocarpa*

has prominently longitudinally ribbed buds and fruit, 3.2–5.5 cm long, (2.2)2.6–4.5 cm wide. It is widespread from the Leopold Range in the south-western Kimberley to the Northern Territory where it occurs on Melville Island, and from Litchfield to Pine Creek then east through the Roper River and Macarthur River areas to Doomadgee in far north-western Queensland. The prominent ribbing of the large fruit combined with the relatively large discoloured leaves make this fully rough-barked bloodwood distinctive.

C. *ptychocarpa* subsp. *aptycha*

buds and fruit lack prominent longitudinal ribs (but may have longitudinal "lines"), 3–5.4 cm long, 2.2–3.8 cm wide. It is restricted to the Top End of the Northern Territory from Coburg Peninsula east to Yirrkala and south to El Sharana. It is easily distinguished from other fully rough-barked bloodwoods in this area by the size of the scurfy buds and the fruit, and the large discoloured adult leaves.

Corymbia ptychocarpa is a highly distinctive species by the size of the fruit alone, and the flower size and colour.

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Origin of Name

Corymbia ptychocarpa: Greek *ptychos*, a fold or cleft and *carpos* fruit, referring to the ribbed buds and fruit.

subsp. *aptycha*: Greek *a*, not and *ptychos*, a fold or cleft, referring to the buds and fruit lacking distinct ribs.

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