

Eucalyptus alligatrix subsp. *alligatrix*

Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Maidenaria | Euryotae | Argyrophyllae

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus alligatrix L.A.S.Johnson & K.D.Hill, *Austral. Syst. Bot.* 8: 509 (1995) subsp. ***alligatrix***.

T: Victoria: Big River, near junction with Taponga River, SW of Jamieson, 24 Apr. 1973, L.A.S.Johnson 7675; holotype: NSW.

Description

Tree to 15 m tall, rarely multi-stemmed from base. Forming a lignotuber.

Bark rough to small branches or rarely the branches <8cm diameter smooth, rough bark thick, fibrous, coarsely furrowed down trunk, dark grey; branchlets glaucous or non-glaucous.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stem rounded or square in cross-section, glaucous or not glaucous, warty or smooth; juvenile leaves always opposite, sessile, orbicular or broadly ovate, 2–4.5 cm long, 2.5–5.2 cm wide, margin entire or crenulate, blue-green, grey-green or glaucous.

Crown composed of opposite, petiolate intermediate leaves and alternate adult leaves.

Adult leaves petiole 0.6–2.4 cm long; blade lanceolate to falcate, 5.4–20 cm long, 1–4.7 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, margin entire, concolorous, glossy or dull, green, blue-green or grey-green, side-veins greater than 45° to midrib, moderately to densely reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and just within margin or well removed from it, oil glands numerous, mostly island.

Inflorescence axillary single, peduncles 0.3–0.7 cm long, buds 3 per umbel, sessile or on pedicels to 0.3 cm long. **Mature buds** ovoid to diamond-shaped, 0.5–0.6 cm long, 0.3–0.5 cm wide, green or glaucous, scar present, operculum conical, stamens inflexed, anthers cuboid or cuneate, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscent by longitudinal slits (non-confluent), style long, locules 3 or 4, the placentae each with 4 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

Fruit sessile or on pedicels to 0.2 cm long, cup-shaped, obconical or campanulate, 0.4–0.5 cm long, 0.4–0.8 cm wide, sometimes glaucous, disc raised or level, valves 3 or 4, strongly exerted or near rim level.

Seeds dark brown, 1–2.2 mm long, ovoid or flattened-ovoid, D-shaped or pointed at one end, usually lacunose, dorsal surface smooth or shallowly pitted, hilum ventral.

Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10): cotyledons bilobed to oblong; stems rounded or square in cross-section, glaucous; leaves sessile and opposite for many nodes, orbicular to cordate, 2.5–4.5 cm long, 2.2–6.5 cm wide, base amplexicaul to rounded, apex emarginate, rounded or pointed, glaucous to grey-green.

Flowering Time

Flowering time unknown.

Notes

Eucalyptus alligatrix is a small to medium-sized tree species of undulating to montane south-eastern Australia inland from the Great Dividing Range. It has extensive, thick rough fibrous bark, glaucous juvenile leaves and a crown of adult and intermediate leaves.

There are three subspecies differing in geography and proportion of adult and sub-adult leaves in the crown:

E. alligatrix* subsp. *alligatrix

From the Eildon – Jamieson – Big River area of Victoria with buds in threes and crown a mixture of alternate narrowly lanceolate adult and opposite, broadly lanceolate, intermediate leaves.

E. alligatrix* subsp. *limaensis

Occurs further north than subsp. *alligatrix*, only near Swanpool in Victoria. A taller tree with a completely adult crown of consistently alternate narrowly lanceolate leaves, buds in 3s and the smallest fruit of the three subspecies.



E. alligatrix* subsp. *miscella

Has a very restricted distribution near Rylstone, New South Wales, and is a smaller spreading woodland tree with a completely adult crown but with broader lanceolate leaves compared with subsp. *limaensis*. Bud clusters are a mixture of 3s and 7s on the same tree.

Eucalyptus alligatrix belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Maidenaria*, a large group of species more or less restricted to south-eastern Australia, characterised by bilobed cotyledons, simple axillary inflorescences, buds with two opercula, stamens with versatile anthers and flattened seeds with a ventral hilum. Within this section, *E. alligatrix* belongs in subsection *Euryote* series *Argyrophyllae* having longitudinally furrowed fibrous rough bark throughout, orbicular or ovate juvenile leaves opposite and sessile for many nodes, small diamond-shaped buds in 3s or mixed 3s and sevens and fruit with prominent disc and valves. *E. alligatrix* has a greener, more adult-leaved crown than *E. cinerea* and *E. conspicua*, whilst *E. cephalocarpa* and *E. nova-anglica* have buds in sevens. These 5 species form series *Argyrophyllae*.

Eucalyptus alligatrix subsp. *limaensis* and *E. alligatrix* subsp. *miscella* are both listed as "Vulnerable" under the Australian Government *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*. Further information may be found at this web address: <http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/sprat.pl>

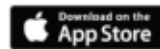
Origin of Name

Eucalyptus alligatrix: Latin *alligatrix*, she who binds together, referring to the relationship of the species to *E. cinerea* and *E. cephalocarpa*.

subsp. *limaensis*: after the farming district, Lima, in north-east Victoria, where the subspecies occurs.

subsp. *miscella*: Latin *miscella*, mixed, referring to the 3- and 7-flowered inflorescences on the same tree.

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