

Eucalyptus annettae

Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Bisectae | Destitutae | Falcatae | Rugatae

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus annettae D.Nicolle & M.E.French, *Nuytsia* 22: 441 (2012).

T: Western Australia: [Cape Arid National Park —precise details withheld], 7 April 2011, *D. Nicolle 6011 & M.E. French*; holo: PERTH; iso: AD, CANB, NSW.



Description

Mallet to 20 m tall but often smaller. Lignotuber absent.

Bark rough hard and dark grey on lower ca 2 m of trunk, smooth grey over cream above that. Young reproductive trees may lack or have virtually no rough bark.

Branchlets angular but soon rounded, glaucous or not so; lacking oil glands in the pith.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stems glaucous; juvenile leaves always petiolate, opposite for several nodes but becoming alternate, orbicular or ovate, no measurements available, blue-green or glaucous.

Adult leaves alternate, petioles 1.8–3 cm long; blade ovate to lanceolate, 9–13 cm long, 2–5 cm wide, thick textured, base tapering to petiole, margin entire, apex pointed, concolorous, dull bluish green maturing glossy dark green, side-veins at an acute angle to midrib, reticulation apparently sparse, intramarginal vein present, oil glands intersectional.

Inflorescence axillary unbranched, peduncles rigidly downturned, broadly strappy 1.4–2.6 cm long widening apically to 0.8–1.3 cm, buds 7 per umbel, pedicels stout but tapering into base of bud, (pedicels (0)0.4–0.7 cm long). **Mature buds** more or less ovoid, ca 1.4–1.6 cm wide and long, the operculum 1 to 2 times the length of the hypanthium which widens below the join, and is visibly ribbed, scar present (outer operculum lost early), operculum conical rarely beaked but not ribbed, stamens inflexed, anthers cuboid, versatile, sub-basifixed, dehiscing by longitudinal slits, style long and straight, stigma blunt, locules 5 or 6, the placentae each with 4 vertical rows of ovules. Flowers creamy white or ? rarely yellowish.

Fruit rigidly downturned, usually pedicellate (0)0.4–0.7 cm long), obconical, 1.2–1.6 cm long, 1.5–2 cm wide, usually ribbed, disc descending obliquely or level, valves 5 or 6, slender and prominently exerted but tips fragile and easily lost.

Seeds grey, 1.8–2.5 mm long, ovoid or flattened-ovoid, dorsal surface smooth, hilum ventral.

Cultivated seedlings (measured at node 10): cotyledons Y-shaped (bisected); stems squared in cross-section, warty, glaucous; leaves opposite for ca 12–15 nodes, always petiolate, lower leaves linear then ovate to elliptical becoming orbicular about node 15, 1.8–2.3 cm long, 1.3–1.8 cm wide, base tapering to rounded or truncate, margin entire, apex rounded, blue-green or glaucous, dull.

Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in August and December.

Notes

A mallet endemic to Western Australia, found in Israelite Bay hinterland on sandplain. Slender erect trees to 20 m tall but usually smaller, with rough hard dark grey bark on the lower trunk and smooth-barked upper trunk and branches, adult leaves glossy green, umbels of ribbed glaucous buds in 7s are borne on downturned strappy peduncles. and juvenile growth with petiolate orbicular to ovate leaves and glaucous appearance.

Within its restricted natural range *Eucalyptus annettae* is unlikely to be confused with any other eucalypt.

Further to the west and north-west it might be confused with *E. kessellii* subsp. *kessellii* which occasionally occurs as a single stemmed (lignotubous) tree, but is commonly a mallee, with some rough bark, but which lacks the glaucousness and usually has buds in 3s, with the operculum visibly ribbed (unlike *E. annettae*). The buds of *E. annettae* also have some similarity with those of the related coastal mallee *E. goniantha* subsp. *kynoura* a rare species found from much further west near Denmark, WA.

In the classification of Brooker (2000) the more recently published *E. annettae* would belong in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Bisectae* subsection *Destitutae* because buds have two opercula, cotyledons are Y-shaped and branchlets lack oil glands in the pith. Within this sub-subsection *E. annettae* belongs to a group of mallet and mallee species characterised by often pendulous inflorescences with pedicellate ovoid buds with a conical to beaked operculum, flattened-globose fruits with exerted fragile valves and adult leaves that are green, densely reticulate and have numerous intersectional oil glands and smooth bark. The species are the mallets *E. falcata*, *E. ornata*, *E. purpurata*, *E. recta*, *E. rugulata* and *E. annettae*; and the mallees *E. dorrienii*, *E. petrensis*, *E. ecostata* and the newly described *E. opimiflora*, plus the coastal and sub-coastal mallees *E. goniantha* (with two subspecies), *E. kessellii* (with two

subspecies), *E. notactites* and *E. semiglobosa*. These mallets and mallees together form series *Falcatæ* subseries *Rugatæ*, albeit in a form somewhat modified from Brooker's classification.

The first collections of this little known species were made in 1980 by L. Otte and also by Ken Newbey, then by Ian Brooker in 1985. However it was not recognized as being a distinct species until collected by Dean Nicolle and Malcolm French in 2011.

Origin of Name

Eucalyptus annettae: after Annett Börner geo-ecologist of Adelaide.

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