

Eucalyptus approximans subsp. *approximans*

Barren Mountain mallee, New England mallee ash

Classification

Eucalyptus | Eucalyptus | Eucalyptus | Strictae | Regulares

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus approximans Maiden, J. & *Proc. Roy. Soc. New South Wales* 53: 65 (1919)
subsp. **approximans**.

T: Barren Mtn, NSW, 1901, *H.Deane s.n.*; holo: NSW.

Description

Slender mallee to 6 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

Bark smooth, white, grey, brown or pinkish, occasionally with ribbons of decorticated bark in the upper branches.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stem rounded or square in cross-section, warty on lower internodes; juvenile leaves at first subsessile, opposite for 2 to 5 pairs then alternate, shortly petiolate, narrowly lanceolate to linear, 6.5–14 cm long, 1–2 cm wide, glossy, green.

Adult leaves alternate, petiole 0.2–1.5 cm long; blade linear to lanceolate to falcate, 5.5–12 cm long, 0.5–1.6 cm wide, base tapering evenly to petiole, margin entire, concolorous, glossy, green, side-veins obscure or, if visible, acute, reticulation absent or sparse, intramarginal vein obscure or if present well removed from margin, oil glands numerous, island.

Inflorescence axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.4–1.2 cm long, buds usually 7 (rarely 3) per umbel, pedicels 0.1–0.3 cm long. **Mature buds** clavate, 0.5 cm long, 0.3 cm wide, warty, scar absent, operculum rounded to flattened, stamens inflexed or irregularly flexed, anthers reniform to cordate, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscent by confluent slits, style short or long, ovary chambers 3 or 4 each with 2 vertical ovules. Flowers white.

Fruit on pedicels 0.1–0.3 cm long, cylindrical or cup-shaped, 0.6–0.8 cm long, 0.5–0.8 cm wide, disc slightly raised, level or descending, valves 3 or 4, near rim level or enclosed.

Seeds pale to mid brown, 1–2 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, warty (feel rough); leaves at first subsessile, opposite for 4 or 5 nodes, then alternate, shortly petiolate, linear to narrowly lanceolate, 9–14 cm long, 0.5–2.5 cm wide, tapering at base, slightly discolorous, very glossy, green.

Flowering Time

Flowering time not recorded but expected to be similar to *E. approximans* subsp. *codonocarpa*.

A useful small eucalypt in horticulture.

Notes

A green-leaved mallee ash species of the Northern Tablelands of New South Wales and adjacent southern Queensland. *Eucalyptus approximans* has smooth bark and glossy green crown of linear to narrowly lanceolate leaves.

It has more prominently glandular leaves than the southern mallee ashes of *Eucalyptus* section *Eucalyptus* series *Strictae*. Of these, it may be related to the fine-leaved *E. cunninghamii* of the Blue Mountains and *E. paliformis* from remote Wadbilliga area of the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales.

There are two subspecies:

E. approximans subsp. **approximans**

Usually has buds in sevens and cupular to cylindrical fruit and narrow leaves. It is restricted to Barren Mountain near Ebor.



E. approximans subsp. **codonocarpa**

Has three- and seven-budded inflorescences, cylindrical to campanulate fruit and relatively broader leaves. It is known from Pheasant Mountain near Backwater NE of Guyra, the Waratah Trig area, Gibraltar Range National Park NE of Glen Innes, Nightcap Mountain Warra State Forest, Mt Norman and Castle Mountain in the Girraween National Park NE of Wallangarra, Mt Barney and Mt Maroon SW of Beaudesert and the MacPherson Range in the Binna Burra – Dave's Creek area of Lamington National Park. *Eucalyptus microcodon* was described in 1991 from Mt Barney, Mt Glennie and the Lamington Plateau and is included with subsp. *codonocarpa* in EUCLID: its distinguishing features, especially bud numbers and fruit dimensions, have been found to differ inconsistently from subsp. *codonocarpa*. The more subjective differences in leaf width, thickness and relative obscurity of side-veins highlighted by Johnson & Hill (1991) are also a bit variable and dependent the "adulthood" of the crown leaves and perhaps position in the crown.

In the classification of Brooker (2000) *Eucalyptus approximans* belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Eucalyptus* section *Eucalyptus* series *Strictae* (9 species in all), because of a combination of characters: mallee habit with smooth bark, alternate, green juvenile leaves, adult leaves held erect and with obscure side-veins and little or no visible reticulation, single axillary inflorescences, the buds in clusters of three or seven, with buds having only one operculum and reniform anthers, ovules in 2 rows, and \pm pyramidal seeds. Within series *Strictae*, *E. approximans*, *E. cunninghamii* and *E. paliformis* form a small group, subseries *Regulares*, characterised by the leaf oil glands being round in outline.

Origin of Name

Eucalyptus approximans: Latin *approximans*, approaching, perhaps alluding to its relationship with *E. stricta*.

subsp. *codonocarpa*: Greek *codon*, bell and *carpos*, fruit, referring to the fruit shape.

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