

# *Eucalyptus creta*

## Large-fruited gimlet

### Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Bisectae | Glandulosae | Contortae

### Nomenclature

**Eucalyptus creta** L.A.S.Johnson & K.D.Hill, *Teloepa* 4: 213 (1991).



T: Western Australia: 51.4 km NE of Howick Road on Mt Ney track, 21 Oct. 1983, *K.D.Hill 296 & L.A.S.Johnson*; holotype: NSW; isotype: CANB, PERTH.

### Description

**Mallet** to 10 m tall, stems fluted. Non-lignotuberous.

**Bark** smooth throughout, shiny, grey over bronze to greenish brown.

**Branchlets** with oil glands in the pith.

**Juvenile growth (coppice or wild seedling to 50 cm tall):** not seen.

**Adult leaves** coarse, thickish, alternate, petioles 0.8–1.8 cm long; blade lanceolate, (4.7)5.5–13.2 cm long, (0.8)1.2–3.5 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, margin entire or distantly and shallowly scalloped, apex pointed, side-veins greater than 45° to midrib, reticulation moderate to dense and broken, intramarginal vein close to margin, oil glands island, irregular in shape.

**Inflorescence** axillary unbranched, peduncles absent; buds 3 per umbel, sessile. **Mature buds** ovoid (1.5–2.2 cm long, 1.4–2 cm wide) basally flattened and expanded forming a wing on either side of the hypanthium extending to the join with the operculum, scar present, operculum beaked or rarely conical, stamens inflexed, anthers oblong, versatile, sub-basifixed, dehiscing by longitudinal slits, style long and straight, stigma blunt, locules usually 5 (rarely 4 or 6), the placentae each with 8 vertical rows of ovules. Flowers white.

**Fruit** sessile or shortly pedicellate (pedicels 0–0.1 cm long), broadly and shallowly cupular to hemispherical with 2 wings extending from base to rim, 0.8–1.3 cm long, 1.5–2.8 cm wide, disc level or slightly descending, valves usually 5 (rarely 4 or 6), at rim level or exerted.

**Seeds** beige to brown, 1–2 mm long, ovoid or flattened ovoid to cuboid or polygonal, dorsal surface deeply, closely and narrowly fissured, margin toothed, hilum ventral. (Seedcoat often referred to as being honey-combed.)

**Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10):** cotyledons Y-shaped (bisected); stems rounded in cross-section, slightly scabrid at least until node 9; leaves always petiolate, opposite for 4 to 6 nodes then alternate, ovate-lanceolate, 4.5–6 cm long, 1.5–2 cm wide, dull, green to grey-green, lamina slightly scabrid.

### Flowering Time

Flowering time unknown.

### Notes

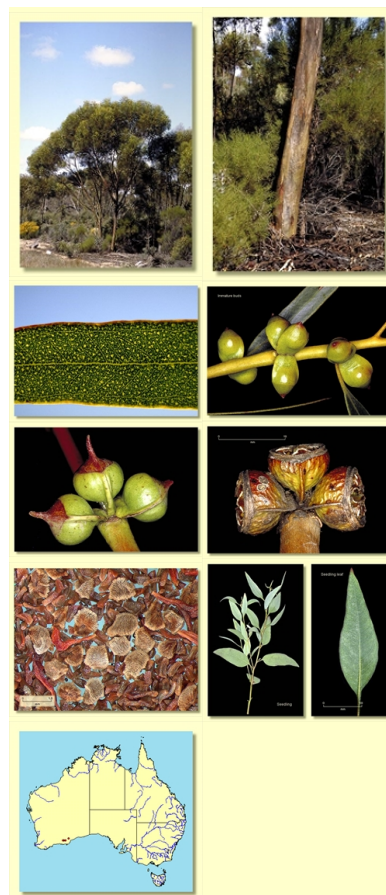
A mallet of restricted subcoastal distribution in Western Australia, north of Esperance, on flat clayey sites. The trunk is smooth, grey and coppery, the adult leaves glossy green and the sessile winged buds are formed in threes.

*Eucalyptus creta* belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Bisectae* subsection *Glandulosae* because the buds have two opercula, the cotyledons are bisected and the branchlets have numerous oil glands in the pith.

Within this large subsection *E. creta* belongs to a small well known group, the gimlets (series *Contortae*), notable for the slender fluted, twisted shiny colourful trunks. The gimlets are further recognised by very irregular island oil glands in the leaves and irregularly and deeply fissured seed-coats.

There are only two species in series *Contortae* with buds in threes, *E. diptera* and *E. creta*. The only difference between them is the size of buds and fruits—*E. creta* has buds 0.9–1.2 cm diameter and fruit 1.5–2.8 cm diameter, whilst *E. diptera* has smaller buds and fruit. The buds and fruit of both species are two-winged. All other gimlets have buds in sevens.

### Origin of Name



*Eucalyptus creta*: Latin *cretus*, grown bigger, referring to the buds and fruits compared with related species.

---

Copyright © CANBR 2020, all rights reserved.



Web edition hosted at <https://apps.lucidcentral.org/euclid>