

# *Eucalyptus decorticans*

## Gum-topped ironbark

### Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Adnataria | Apicales | Siderophloiae | Subglaucae

### Nomenclature

***Eucalyptus decorticans*** (F.M.Bailey) Maiden, *Crit. Revis. Eucalyptus* 5: 231 (1921).

*Eucalyptus siderophloia* f. *decorticans* F.M.Bailey, *Queensland Agric. J.* 26: 127 (1911). T. Queensland: Eidsvold, *T.L.Bancroft s.n. anno* 1911; lecto BRI [AQ099803]: *vide* Bean, A.R., *Telopea* 12(3): 311-312 (2009); ?isolecto: CANB.

### Description

**Tree** to 40 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

**Ironbark** on trunk and larger branches, dark grey or black, smaller branches conspicuously smooth-barked, white to grey-white to yellow to orange.

**Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm):** stem rounded or square in cross-section; juvenile leaves opposite for a few pairs, then alternate, petiolate, narrowly lanceolate, 5–9 cm long, 0.5–1.5 cm wide, discolorous, grey-green or green.

**Adult leaves** alternate, petiole 1–2.5 cm long; blade lanceolate to falcate, 5.5–12.5(17) cm long, 1–3 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, concolorous, dull, green to blue-green, side-veins at an acute or sometimes wider angle to midrib, very densely reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and just within margin, oil glands sparse and mostly intersectoral.

**Inflorescence** terminal compound, or axillary compound or axillary single umbels, peduncles 0.5–1.5 cm long, buds 7 per umbel, pedicels 0.2–0.6 cm long. **Mature buds** clavate to fusiform to diamond-shaped, 0.6–0.7 cm long, 0.3–0.4 cm wide, smooth, scar present, operculum conical, stamens usually irregularly flexed, anthers adnate, cuboid, dehiscing by broad lateral pores or slits, style long, stigma blunt or pin-head shaped, locules 4, the placentae each with 4 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

**Fruit** pedicellate (pedicels 0.2–0.7 cm long), obconical or cup-shaped to barrel-shaped, rarely cylindrical, 0.7–0.9 cm long, 0.5–0.6 cm wide, disc descending, valves usually 4, near rim level or enclosed or slightly exserted.

**Seeds** brown, 1–2 mm long, ovoid or flattened-ovoid, dorsal surface shallowly pitted, hilum ventral.

**Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10):** cotyledons reniform to oblong; stems square in cross-section; leaves always petiolate, opposite for 3–8 nodes then alternate, linear-lanceolate, 4.8–11 cm long, 0.8–1.5 cm wide, base tapering, dull, green, discolorous.

### Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in April, August and September.

### Notes

A medium-sized ironbark tree widespread in south-east Queensland from sandstone hills in the Wondul Range area north-west of Inglewood, north through the Haden–Dalby–Jandowae–Gayndah area to just south of Monto, then westwards through the Expedition Range east of Rolleston to the Drummond Range area north of Tambo and the Cheston Range area north-east of Morven, with an outlier in the northern section of the Drummond Range near Miclere just N of Clermont. *Eucalyptus decorticans* is characterised by the conspicuously smooth-barked branches in the upper canopy, the diamond-shaped to obovoid buds and lanceolate juvenile leaves.

Within its sub-group it is closest to *E. siderophloia* and *E. rhombica*. All three species have diamond-shaped buds with a conical operculum. It can be separated from *E. siderophloia* by its conspicuously smooth-barked branches in the upper canopy, rough-barked in *E. siderophloia*. It can be separated from *E. rhombica* by its slightly smaller fruit, 0.6–0.7 cm wide in *E. decorticans* and 0.8–1 cm wide in *E. rhombica*. It is also closely related to *E. fibrosa* and can be separated from that species by its much narrower lanceolate juvenile leaves (*E. fibrosa* with ovate to orbicular to deltoid juvenile leaves). Within its area of occurrence there are four other ironbarks from this subgroup that have their stamens irregularly flexed and all the stamens fertile. They are *E. crebra*, *E. tholiformis*, *E. beaniana* and *E. melanophloia*. *E. tholiformis* and *E. beaniana* have more or less oblong buds with a bluntly conical to rounded operculum. *E. tholiformis* can be further



separated by having ovate juvenile leaves. *E. crebra* usually has much smaller buds and fruit and rough-barked upper branches. *E. melanophloia* has glaucous, sessile opposite leaves in the mature crown.

All other ironbarks within its area of occurrence belong to other groups that have buds with stamens all regularly flexed and have an outer whorl of staminodes.

### **MORE ABOUT IRONBARKS**

#### Origin of Name

*Eucalyptus decorticans*: Latin *decorticans*, without bark, referring to the peeling bark on the medium sized to small branches.

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