

# *Eucalyptus delicata*

## Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Bisectae | Destitutae | Subulatae | Spirales

## Nomenclature

**Eucalyptus delicata** L.A.S.Johnson & K.D.Hill, *Telopea* 8: 182 (1999).



T: Western Australia: 8.3 km from Norseman to Esperance road on Peak Charles road (32° 46' S, 121° 27'E), 8 Nov. 1986, *K.D.Hill 2316*, *L.A.S.Johnson & D.Blaxell*; holo: NSW; iso: BRI, CANB, K, MO, PERTH.

## Description

**Tree** to 15 m tall or rarely a mallee. Forming a lignotuber.

**Bark** rough over most or on the lower portion of stem, dark grey to grey-brown, fibrous to scaly, smooth bark above white to pink-grey.

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

**Juvenile** stem many-sided, juvenile leaves spirally arranged for many nodes ("heath-like") but by 50 cm tall becoming alternately arranged, sessile to shortly petiolate, linear to narrowly elliptic-oblong to narrowly lanceolate, 0.8-7.5 cm long, 0.2-1.7 cm wide, base tapering, margin entire, apex rounded to pointed, dull, grey-green.

**Adult leaves** alternate, petioles (0.5)0.8-1.7 cm long; blade linear to narrowly lanceolate, (6)7-10(11) cm long, 0.5-1 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, margin entire, apex pointed, green, glossy, side-veins at an acute or wider angle to midrib, reticulation dense, intramarginal vein close to margin, oil glands large, round, numerous, intersectional.

**Inflorescence** axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.7-1.5 cm long, buds 7, 9 or 11 per umbel, pedicels 0.2-0.5 cm long. **Mature buds** ovoid (0.5-0.8 cm long, 0.3 cm wide), scar present, operculum conical to rounded (0.2-0.5 cm long), stamens irregularly flexed, anthers more or less globular, basifixed and almost adnate, dehiscent by short lateral slits, style long and straight, stigma blunt, locules 3, the placentae each with 4 vertical rows of ovules. Flowers creamy white.

**Fruit** pedicellate (pedicels 0.2-0.4 cm long), truncate-globose to barrel-shaped, 0.4-0.5 cm long, 0.4-0.5 cm wide, disc descending, valves appearing prominently exerted due to persistent fragile style remnants.

**Seeds** brown-grey, 1-2 mm long, ovoid to flattened or depressed-ovoid, dorsal surface smooth, hilum ventral.

**Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca 25 cm tall):** cotyledons Y-shaped (bisected), stems many-sided, leaves opposite for ca 3 nodes then becoming spirally arranged for many nodes ("heath-like"), sessile to subsessile, linear to very narrowly elliptic-oblong, 0.5-2.7 cm long, 0.2-0.7 cm wide, base tapering, margin entire, apex rounded to pointed, dull, grey-green to green. Lignotuber not visible as a swelling on seedling stem.

## Flowering Time

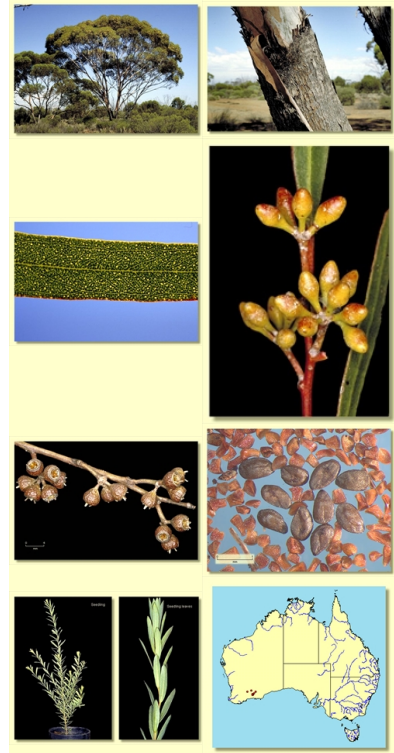
Flowering has been recorded in March.

## Notes

Normally a small to medium-sized tree growing from east of the cross-roads east of Hyden, south-east to Peak Charles and Kumarl, extending north-east to the Norseman - Fraser Range area.

*Eucalyptus delicata* belongs 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 subsection *E. delicata* is part of a large taxonomic series *Subulatae* further characterised by globoid basifixed anthers, grey smooth seeds with shallow longitudinal furrows, and fruit with persistent exerted style remnants. Series *Subulatae* is divided principally into four subseries based on the juvenile leaves: one with spiral, crowded seedling phyllotaxis (subseries *Spirales*), another with decussate and decurrent seedling leaves (subseries *Decurrentes*), another with decussate non-decurrent seedling leaves (subseries *Decussatae*), and a fourth with disjunct, petiolate seedling leaves (subseries *Oleaginae*).

*Eucalyptus delicata* is in subseries *Spirales* together with *E. longicornis* and *E. oleosa* and can be distinguished from these two species by its small narrow adult leaves and the small buds and fruit. Because of its fruit size, *E. delicata* apparently has been confused with Salmon Gum (*E. salmonophloia*) and can be easily separated from that by the presence of rough bark on the trunk (colourful smooth bark in *E.*



*salmonophloia*) and irregularly flexed staminal filaments (regularly inflexed in *E. salmonophloia*).

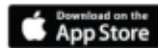
*E. longissima* is another closely related species of series *Subulatae* with relatively small buds and fruit. *E. longissima* (subseries *Oleaginae*) can be easily recognised by having lanceolate, petiolate juvenile leaves (linear and sessile to sub-sessile in *E. delicata*) and is normally a mallee in habit.

### Origin of Name

*Eucalyptus delicata*: Latin *delicatus*, dainty, referring to the small buds and fruits.

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