

Eucalyptus exigua

Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Dumaria | Ovulares

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus exigua Brooker & Hopper, *Nuytsia* 9: 60 (1993).



T: 22 km W of Mt Day Road on Hyden – Norseman track, 32° 15'S, 120° 19'E, 7 Nov. 1983, *M.I.H. Brooker* 8359; holotype: PERTH; isotype: CANB, NSW.

Description

Mallee to 3 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

Bark smooth throughout, whitish grey.

Branchlets with a few pith oil glands but sometimes small and difficult to find.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stems rounded in cross-section; juvenile leaves always petiolate, alternate, narrowly elliptical to lanceolate, 3.5–6 cm long, 0.7–1.5 cm wide, dull, bluish green.

Adult leaves alternate, petioles 0.5–1.7 cm long; blade linear to narrowly lanceolate, 4–9 cm long, 0.5–1.3 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, margin entire, apex pointed, concolorous, dull to slightly glossy, green, acute side-veins present or all venation except midrib obscured by numerous round oil glands.

Inflorescence axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.5–1.5 cm long, buds 7, 9 or 11 per umbel, pedicels short and stout, 0.3–0.5 cm long. **Mature buds** more or less cylindrical (0.6–0.7 cm long, 0.4–0.5 cm wide), always with a constriction at join of hypanthium and operculum, scar present, operculum flattened with a conspicuous but short beak or an apiculum, stamens inflexed, anthers oblong, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscent by longitudinal slits, style long and straight, stigma broadly rounded, locules 4, the placentae each with 4 vertical rows of ovules. Flowers white.

Fruit pedicellate (pedicels 0.3–0.5 cm long), shortly barrel-shaped to obconical, 0.5–0.7 cm long, 0.5–0.8 cm wide, disc descending, valves 4, at rim level.

Seeds mid-brown, 0.5–1.5 mm long, flattened-ovoid, dorsal surface shallowly and clearly reticulate, hilum ventral.

Cultivated seedlings (measured at node 10): cotyledons oblong-reniform; stems rounded in cross-section; leaves always petiolate, opposite for 4 to 6 nodes then alternate, lanceolate to narrowly so, 4.5–6 cm long, 0.8–1.5 cm wide, dull green to grey-green.

Flowering Time

Flowering time unknown.

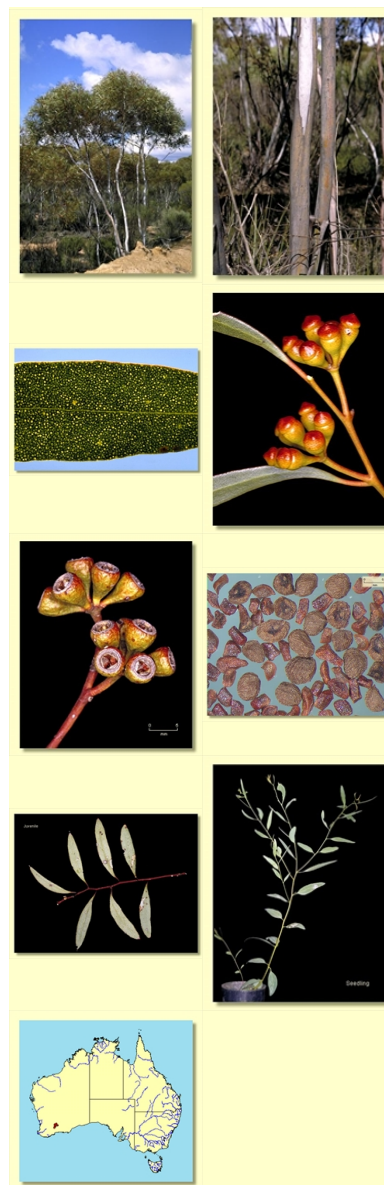
Notes

A spindly mallee species endemic to Western Australia, occurring in the general area of the Hyden Scrub from the Forrestania Cross-roads east towards Mt Day, but it is not common. It has smooth bark, glossy green crown and beaked buds with a constriction at the base of the operculum.

Eucalyptus exigua belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Dumaria* because the buds have two opercula, stamens are strongly inflexed, ovules are in four rows on the placentae and cotyledons are reniform. Within section *Dumaria* it belongs to a small subgroup of nine closely related species which are together called series *Ovulares*. The series is further diagnosed by glandular pith, cuboid anthers, and seeds with a brown shallowly and clearly reticulate dorsal seed coat.

Some of the species in series *Ovulares* are completely smooth-barked (*E. cyclostoma*, *E. cylindrocarpa*, *E. exigua* and smaller plants of *E. oraria*) while others (*E. aequioperta*, *E. baudiniana*, *E. comitae-vallis*, *E. myriadena* and *E. ovularis*) have rough bark over at least part of the stems.

E. exigua is closest to *E. comitae-vallis* and *E. cyclostoma*, which also have buds constricted at the join of operculum and hypanthium. It differs from both of these in its smaller stature and smaller buds and fruit. Geographically *E. exigua* occurs between these two species.



Origin of Name

Eucalyptus exigua: Latin *exiguus*, little, alluding to the habit compared with that of the related *E. brachycorys*.

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