

# *Eucalyptus rodwayi*

## Swamp peppermint

### Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Maidenaria | Triangulares | Foveolatae

### Nomenclature

**Eucalyptus rodwayi** R.T.Baker & H.G.Sm., *Pap. Proc. Roy. Soc. Tasmania* 191 (1912); *Res. Eucalypts Tasmania* 53 (1912).

T: Interlaken, Tas., 28 May 1912, *L.G.Irby NSW 54113*; lecto: NSW, *vide* L.A.S.Johnson, *Contr. New South Wales Natl. Herb.* 3: 105 (1962).

### Description

**Tree** to 20 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

**Bark** rough on trunk and larger branches, fibrous to box-type, the outer layer crumbly, inner layer hard, grey and grey-brown.

**Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm):** stem rounded in cross-section, usually warty; juvenile leaves opposite and sessile for 6 to 8 nodes, then sub-opposite to alternate, shortly petiolate, lanceolate to elliptical, 2.5–7.8 cm long, 0.7–2 cm wide, green, not scabrid.

**Adult leaves** alternate, petiole 0.5–1.5 cm long; blade narrowly lanceolate to falcate, 5–13.5 cm long, 0.7–2 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, concolorous, glossy, green, side-veins acute, densely to very densely reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and just within margin, oil glands island and intersectional.

**Inflorescence** axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.4–0.8 cm long, buds 7, 9 or 11, pedicellate, pedicels 0.2–0.3 cm long. **Mature buds** ovoid to diamond-shaped (0.4–0.6 cm long, 0.2–0.35 cm wide), green to yellow, scar present, operculum conical (0.2–0.3 cm long), stamens inflexed or irregularly flexed, anthers cuboid to oblong, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscing by longitudinal slits (non-confluent), style long, stigma blunt, locules 3 or 4, the placentae each with 4 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

**Fruit** sessile or pedicellate, pedicels 0–0.2 cm long, obconical to hemispherical, 0.2–0.5 cm long, 0.4–0.6 cm wide, disc raised-annular, or level, valves 3 or 4, near rim level.

**Seeds** brown or grey, 1.2–2 mm long, ovoid or flattened-ovoid, often pointed at one end, lacunose, dorsal surface smooth or pitted, hilum ventral.

**Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10):** cotyledons bilobed to oblong; stems rounded in cross-section, slightly warty or smooth; leaves sessile to shortly petiolate, opposite for 6 to 8 nodes then alternate, oblong to elliptic or ovate-lanceolate, 3–5.5 cm long, 1–2.2 cm wide, base rounded to tapering or slightly lobed, glossy, green.

### Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in January, February, March and December.

### Notes

A small to medium-sized tree endemic to east and central Tasmania away from the coast on areas of impeded drainage.

One of the small-fruited swamp gums, *E. rodwayi* is easily recognised by the rough bark, long, narrow, glossy green juvenile leaves, small adult leaves, small buds and obconical fruit. Related to *E. aggregata*, a species from Victoria and New South Wales, *E. rodwayi* differs by the taller stature, longer juvenile leaves, and comparatively larger buds and fruit. Buds and fruit of *E. rodwayi* are smaller than those of the other Tasmanian swamp gums, *E. barberi*, *E. ovata* and *E. brookeriana*, all of which have less, if any, rough bark.

*Eucalyptus rodwayi* belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Maidenaria* because the cotyledons are bilobed, inflorescences axillary, anthers versatile and seeds flattened-ovoid. Within this large section, *E. rodwayi* is one of ten species forming series *Foveolatae*, further characterised by being swamp-dwellers with fruit more or less obconical.

Despite the common name Swamp peppermint, this species is not related to the traditional "peppermint" eucalypts, which are in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Eucalyptus*.



## Origin of Name

*Eucalyptus rodwayi*: after Leonard Rodway (1853–1936). Leonard Rodway was a certified naval officer in the Royal Navy and before migrating to Tasmania in 1880, gained a licentiate with the Royal College of Surgeons of London. He practised as a dentist in Hobart for many years. Botany was his chief hobby and he did a lot of notable work in that field. In recognition of that he was appointed Honorary Botanist to the Tasmanian Government in 1896 and held the position for 36 years. He contributed many papers to the Royal Society of Tasmania, with his major publication being the comprehensively illustrated *Flora of Tasmania* –1903.

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