Eucalyptus saxatilis

Suggan Buggan mallee, Mount Wheeler mallee

Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Maidenaria | Euryotae | Orbiculares

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus saxatilis J.B.Kirkp. & Brooker, Austral. Forest Res. 7: 209 (1977).

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T: Little River Gorge Lookout, Victoria, 37°05´S, 148°18´E, 18 Sept. 1975, *M.I.H.Brooker 4967*; holo: CANB; iso: AD, BRI, K, MEL, NSW, PERTH.

Description

Mallee or small tree to 5 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

Bark smooth, slightly powdery, pale grey to creamy white and pale coppery, pink or greenish, shedding in ribbons.

Branchlets glaucous or not glaucous.

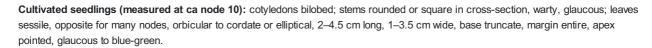
Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stem rounded in cross-section, usually glaucous; juvenile leaves opposite and sessile for many pairs, orbicular to elliptical to oblong, 1–3.5 cm long, 1–2.7 cm wide, glaucous.

Adult leaves alternate, petiole 0.8–2 cm long; blade lanceolate to falcate, 5.5–20 cm long, 0.7–2 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, concolorous, dull, blue-green to blue-grey, side-veins at an acute or wider angle to midrib, moderately reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and just within margin, oil glands island.

Inflorescence axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.2–0.5 cm long, buds 3 per umbel, usually sessile rarely with a pedicel 0.1 cm long. **Mature buds** contracted medially, 0.9–1 cm long, 0.8–0.9 cm wide, hypanthium obconical, glaucous, scar present, operculum flattened and beaked, stamens inflexed, anthers cuboid to oblong, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscing by longitudinal slits (non-confluent), style long, stigma blunt, locules 3 to 5, the placentae each with 4 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

Fruit sessile, campanulate, 0.7–1.1 cm long, 0.8–1.4 cm wide, glaucous, disc raised or level, valves 3, 4 or 5, slightly exserted.

Seeds black, 2-3.5 mm long, ovoid to flattened-ovoid, lacunose, dorsal surface smooth or shallowly pitted, hilum ventral.



Flowering Time

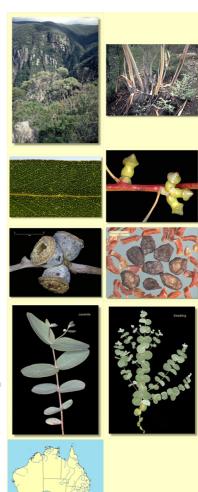
Flowering has been recorded in August and March.

Notes

A mallee or small tree known only from a few rocky localities, viz. Stradbroke Chasm, Mt Wheeler and Little River Gorge in far eastern Victoria; and a few remote localities in far south-eastern New South Wales, north-west of Willis, west of Mt Trooper, Snodgrass Ridge, ridge near Windmill Hill and Black Jack Mountain all near the Snowy River.

Eucalyptus saxatilis has smooth bark and sessile, opposite, round, glaucous juvenile leaves and is easily distinguished from other three-budded species by the combination of habitat, habit and stature, and large, sessile, glaucous buds and fruit.

Eucalyptus saxatilis belongs in Eucalyptus subgenus Symphyomyrtus section Maidenaria, a large group of species more or less restricted to south-eastern Australia, characterised by bilobed cotyledons, simple axillary inflorescences, buds with two opercula, stamens with versatile anthers and flattened seeds with a ventral hilum. Within this section, E. saxatilis, with nine other species, form series Orbiculares having orbicular to elliptical juvenile leaves opposite for many nodes, a blue-green to blue-grey crown, sessile buds in threes, and fruit with valves near rim level. The species in series Orbiculares are confined to far south-eastern New South Wales and eastern Victoria (E.



chapmaniana, E. glaucescens, E. perriniana, E. pulverulenta) and Tasmania (E. archeri, E. cordata, E. gunnii, E. morrisbyi, E. perriniana, E. urnigera).

Origin of Name

Eucalyptus saxatilis: Latin saxatilis, rock-dwelling, from the habitat of occurrence.

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