

# *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).



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 exerted.

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

**Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10):** cotyledons bilobed; stems rounded or square in cross-section, warty, glaucous; leaves sessile, opposite for many nodes, orbicular to cordate or elliptical, 2–4.5 cm long, 1–3.5 cm wide, base truncate, margin entire, apex pointed, glaucous to blue-green.

### 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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