

Eucalyptus tricarpa

Red ironbark

Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Adnataria | Terminales | Melliodorae | Solidae

Nomenclature

Eucalyptus tricarpa (L.A.S.Johnson) L.A.S.Johnson & K.D.Hill, *Telopea* 4: 247 (1991).

Eucalyptus sideroxylon subsp. *tricarpa* L.A.S.Johnson, *Contr. New South Wales Natl Herb.* 3: 122 (1962). T: Tilba Tilba to Wallaga Lake, NSW, 20 Nov. 1950, *L.A.S.Johnson NSW 54090*; holotype: NSW.

Eucalyptus tricarpa subsp. *decora* K.Rule, *Muelleria* 20: 27 (2004). T: Victoria: Sunraysia Highway, 42.4 km S of the southern roundabout, St Arnaud, 10 May 2002, *K. Rule 0250*; holotype: MEL iso: AD, CANB, NSW.

Description

Tree to 35 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

Ironbark to small branches, dark grey to black, deeply furrowed, thick and hard.

Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm): stem rounded in cross-section; juvenile leaves always petiolate, opposite for 5 to 7 nodes then alternate, elliptical to lanceolate, 4–11 cm long, 1.3–3 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, green to grey-green.

Adult leaves alternate, petiole 1–3 cm long; blade lanceolate to falcate, 8–22 cm long, 1–2.6 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, concolorous, glossy or dull, green to grey-green or glaucous, side veins acute, densely reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and remote from margin (sometimes double), oil glands mostly intersectional.

Inflorescence axillary unbranched, peduncle often pendulous, 0.5–1.8 cm long, buds 3 per umbel or on some plants mixed with umbels of 7, pedicels 0.5–1.8 cm long. **Mature buds** ovoid, 1–1.5 cm long, 0.6–0.9 cm wide, green to creamy (flushed with pink), scar absent, operculum conical to beaked, stamens inflexed, with outer staminodes, anthers adnate, positioned obliquely at filament tip, cuboid, dehiscent by terminal pores, style long, stigma pin-head shaped, locules 4 to 7, the placentae each with 4 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white or pale pink.

Fruit on pedicels 0.5–2 cm long, cylindrical to truncate-globose, 0.8–1.3 cm long, 0.8–1.5 cm wide, disc descending, staminophore broad and deciduous, valves 4 to 7, enclosed.

Seeds brown or grey, 1–2 mm long, ovoid or flattened-ovoid, often pointed at one end, sometimes lacunose, dorsal surface shallowly pitted, hilum ventral.

Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10): cotyledons reniform to oblong; stems square to rounded in cross-section; leaves petiolate, opposite for 6 or 7 pairs, lanceolate, 4–11 cm long, 0.7–4 cm wide, base tapering, margin entire, apex rounded to pointed, concolorous, grey-green to green.

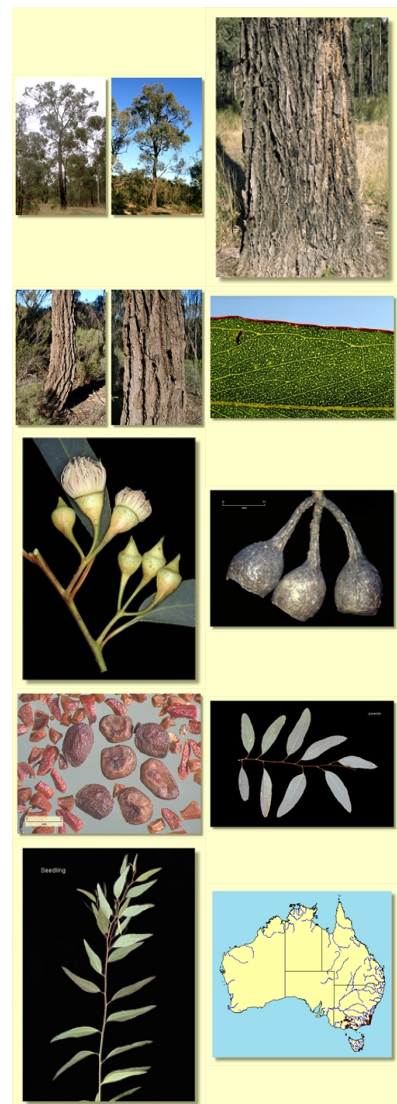
Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in February, March, April, June, July, August, September, October and November.

Notes

A small to tall forest tree of south coastal New South Wales south from Araluen and Burrewurra Point, to coastal and subcoastal areas of Victoria, in Gippsland east from Genoa River, Nowa Nowa, Toongabbie, Licola, the You Yangs, Anglesea and common in the goldfields around Whroo, Bendigo, Wedderburn and Stawell. An ironbark, it is close to *E. sideroxylon* but differs most conspicuously by the three-budded inflorescences (*E. sideroxylon* with seven-budded inflorescences) and to a lesser extent by the larger buds and fruit. Intermediates between *E. tricarpa* and *E. sideroxylon* with buds in threes and sevens occur in some populations, e.g. Mt Nowa Nowa in Gippsland and Ben Boyd National Park near Eden. Flowers are white, rarely pink.

A population near Bealiba in central Victoria has very glaucous forms mixed with more typical green-leaved forms. The taxon *Eucalyptus tricarpa* subsp. *decora* was recently described to accommodate these glaucous forms. However, glaucous and non-glaucous forms grow together and degrees of glaucousness are obvious in the field, and individuals seemingly non-glaucous when fresh may appear glaucous



when dried as specimens. Consequently this new name is not helpful and is placed in synonymy.

Eucalyptus tricarpa and *E. sideroxylon* differ from all other ironbarks by the retention of the outer operculum until flowering.

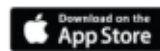
In the classification of Brooker (2000) *Eucalyptus tricarpa* is in subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Adnataria* because the buds have two opercula, ovules are in four rows, seeds are flattened-ovoid, cotyledons are reniform, and anthers are rigid on the staminal filaments. Within section *Adnataria*, *E. tricarpa* is part of a small subgroup, series *Meliiodorae*, further characterised by having buds in axillary clusters, the outer operculum being retained until flowering when both opercula are shed together, and the flowers having outer stamens that are sterile whilst inner stamens are fertile, and a broad staminal ring that can often be seen on the fruit but ultimately is deciduous. The 5 species in series *Meliiodorae* are *E. sideroxylon*, *E. tricarpa*, *E. melliodora*, *E. leucoxylon* (with 4 subspecies) and *E. petiolaris*.

MORE ABOUT IRONBARKS

Origin of Name

Eucalyptus tricarpa: Greek *tri-*, three and *carpo-*, fruit.

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