

# *Eucalyptus ultima*

## Classification

Eucalyptus | Symphyomyrtus | Bisectae | Destitutae | Subulatae | Oleaginae

## Nomenclature

***Eucalyptus ultima*** L.A.S.Johnson & K.D.Hill, *Teloepa* 8 (2) 188 (1999).

T: Western Australia: Shothole Canyon, Cape Range, 22° 23' S 114° 01' E, *M.I.H.Brooker* 5692, 15 Apr 1977; holo: NSW; iso: AD, CANB, MEL, PERTH.

## Description

**Mallee** to 4 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

**Bark** smooth over most of the stems or occasionally some stems with fibrous rough bark for basal part to 0.5 m. Smooth bark grey to pink-grey to white over cream to coppery.

**Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm):** not seen.

**Adult leaves** alternate, petiole 0.3–1 cm long, linear to narrowly lanceolate, 5.5–10.5 cm long; blade 0.5–1.2 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, concolorous, dull blue-green at first, maturing to slightly glossy, green, side-veins acute or at an angle greater than 45° to the midrib, densely reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and just within margin, oil glands numerous and mostly intersectional.

**Inflorescence** axillary unbranched, peduncles 0.4–1 cm long, buds 9 to ?15, pedicellate, pedicels 0.2–0.4 cm long. **Mature buds** ovoid (0.5–1 cm long, 0.25–0.3 cm wide), scar present, operculum conical to horn-shaped (0.35–0.5 cm long), stamens irregularly flexed, anthers adnate to weakly versatile, basifixed, globose, dehiscent by lateral pores, style long, stigma tapered, locules 3 or 4, the placenta each with 4 vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

**Fruit** pedicellate, pedicels 0.2–0.3 cm long, truncate-globose to cup-shaped, sometimes slightly urceolate, 0.5–0.6 cm long, 0.4–0.5 cm wide, disc descending, valves 3 or 4, valve tips strongly exerted due to fragile style remnants.

**Seeds** light brown to grey, 1–2 mm long, ovoid or flattened-ovoid, occasionally with shallow longitudinal furrows on otherwise smooth dorsal surface, hilum ventral.

**Cultivated seedlings (measured at node 10):** cotyledons Y-shaped (bisected); stems ± round or 5 or more sided in cross-section; smooth, leaves opposite, sessile to very shortly petiolate and linear for the first 2 to 7 nodes then becoming alternate or, in some seedlings becoming spirally arranged, sessile to very shortly petiolate, linear, 4–8.5 cm long, 0.3–0.8 cm wide, dull green.

## Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in April and May.

## Notes

A mallee restricted to the Cape Range area of the Northwest Cape on the mid-coast of Western Australia. Characterised by its smooth bark, the narrow semi-glossy adult leaves and the small truncate globose fruit.

*Eucalyptus ultima* belongs in *Eucalyptus* subgenus *Symphyomyrtus* section *Bisectae* subsection *Destitutae* because buds have two opercula initially, cotyledons are Y-shaped and branchlets lack oil glands in the pith. Within this subsection *E. ultima* is part of the large taxonomic series *Subulatae* further characterised by globose basifixed anthers, grey smooth seeds with shallow longitudinal furrows, and fruit with persistent exerted style remnants. Series *Subulatae* is divided principally into four subseries based on the juvenile leaves, one with spiral, crowded seedling phyllotaxis (subseries *Spirales*), another with decussate and decurrent seedling leaves (subseries *Decurrentes*), another with decussate non-decurrent seedling leaves (subseries *Decussatae*), and a fourth, to which *E. ultima* belongs, with disjunct, petiolate seedling leaves (subseries *Oleaginae*).

The other members of the subseries *Oleaginae* are *E. eremicola*, *E. kochii* and *E. longissima*. *E. ultima* is distinguished by its mallee habit, smooth bark, narrow semi-glossy adult leaves and its very narrow linear seedling leaves. *E. kochii* and *E. longissima* differ by having rough bark over most of the stem. *E. longissima* differs further by normally being a much larger plant. *E. eremicola* subsp. *eremicola* differs only slightly by consistently having basal rough bark and by having slightly wider seedling leaves (*E. ultima* mostly smooth-barked, sometimes with rough bark for c. 0.5 m and with very narrow linear seedling leaves). *E. eremicola* subsp. *peeneri* has dull blue-grey to blue-



green adult leaves.

*Eucalyptus ultima* is somewhat isolated geographically from other species of the series *Subulatae*, and with its small more or less truncate-globose fruit only 0.4-0.5 cm wide, conical to horn-shaped operculum, linear juvenile leaves and elevated habitat should not be confused with other species in the Cape Range area.

### Origin of Name

*Eucalyptus ultima*: Latin *ultimus*, farthest, most distant, referring its occurrence in the farthest of the range for the subseries *Oleaginae*.

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