

Eucalyptus blakelyi

Blakely's red gum

subgenus: *Symphyomyrtus*; section: *Exsertaria*; series: *Erythroxylon*

AUTHORITY: *Eucalyptus blakelyi* Maiden, *A Critical Revision of the Genus Eucalyptus* 4, 43 (1917).

Type: Pilliga Scrub, 10 - 15 miles from Coonabarabran towards Rocky Glen, N.S.W., 11 Aug. 1911, *H.I. Jensen* 129 (holo: NSW).

NAME: Named after William F. Blakely (1875 - 1941) a botanist of New South Wales who described many new eucalypt species and in 1934 published *A Key to the Eucalypts*, which included all eucalypt species known at the time.

DESCRIPTION: Tree, usually single-stemmed, 8 to 18 m tall, forming an inconspicuous lignotuber. Bark smooth throughout; mottled reddish brown and grey over creamy white. Juvenile leaves ovate, dull and blue-green. Adult leaves lanceolate, 15 to 25 mm wide, dull to slightly glossy, blue-green to green. Buds and fruits in groups of 7 to 11. Buds with a long-conical operculum. Flowers white, occurring in winter to summer. Fruits rounded, 4 to 7 mm wide, with an ascending disc and exserted valves. Seeds black.

DISTRIBUTION & HABITAT: *Eucalyptus blakelyi* is distributed to the north and west of the main Great Dividing Range, from the St Arnaud area westwards, extending northwards into New South Wales almost to the Queensland border. In Victoria, the species grows in undulating to hilly terrain, where it prefers well-drained hillslopes, ridges and otherwise rocky sites, in woodland vegetation, often with box or ironbark species such as *E. albens*, *E. microcarpa*, *E. sideroxylon* and *E. tricarpa*. It also occurs on the rocky slopes of the Snowy River valley in east Gippsland where it may intergrade with the similar *E. tereticornis*.

CULTIVATION & USES: Occasionally cultivated for broadscale planting for shade and farm forestry. The reddish timber is useful for on-farm construction and is an excellent fuelwood.

NOTES: *Eucalyptus blakelyi* may be confused with *E. camaldulensis*, though the former is mostly restricted to well-drained hilly sites, unlike the latter. *Eucalyptus blakelyi* differs from *E. camaldulensis* especially in the black rather than yellow seeds and the conical rather than beaked operculum. The two species occasionally intergrade where their ranges overlap in the upper Murray River valley.

Eucalyptus blakelyi is similar to *E. tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*, differing from the latter mainly in the non-constricted operculum. Some populations in the Snowy River Valley may be difficult to ascribe to one species or the other and may represent intergrades.

Eucalyptus blakelyi is also similar to *E. species aff. dwyeri*, differing from the latter in the ovate juvenile leaves (juvenile leaves lanceolate in *E. species aff. dwyeri*), longer pedicels and more ascending disc to the fruit (fruit disc near level in *E. species aff. dwyeri*).

