

MYRTACEAE

*Eucalyptus saligna* x *E. botryoides*

WOLLONGONG WOOLLYBUTT

This tree was referred to as Woollybutt by local timber getters of old.



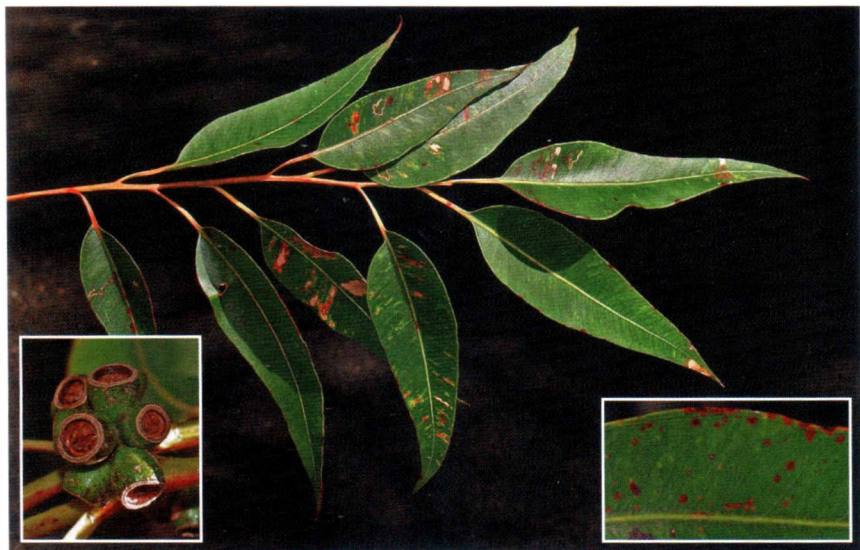
NORTH OF SYDNEY, *Eucalyptus saligna* and *E. botryoides* are considered to be two distinct species occupying two separate habitats; *E. botryoides* along the coastal strip by the ocean and *E. saligna* further inland on fertile mountainsides and alluvial sites near watercourses. Morphologically, *E. botryoides* has stomata on the upper and lower surfaces of the leaves and in *E. saligna* the stomata are confined to the lower surface. South of Port Jackson however, the "species" that



most resembles *E. saligna* has stomata on both surfaces. This population is considered to be a swarm of hybrids between *E. botryoides* and *E. saligna*. On field examination, the "species" can be seen to vary widely in many characters. Within this group, the habit ranges from a tall tree to 40m, with a shaft-like main trunk and little rough bark at the base, to a relatively short tree of crooked habit with rough bark sometimes up to two-thirds of its height. There are many variants between these extremes.

Likewise, buds and fruit of this "species" vary from a sessile, thick-walled calyx tube on a quite flattened peduncle, to a thin-walled, pedicellate calyx tube on a much thinner, almost terete peduncle. Other characters vary also. There seems to be few parts of this population where





all the individuals are consistent and typical of *E. saligna*.

This tree is susceptible to a lerp insect and is rarely seen without the characteristic damage, which does however serve as an identifying feature. The damage consists of roughly rectangular, brown, dead spots on the leaves, 5mm to 10mm wide and 10mm to 20mm long which, as the summer progresses, coalesce.

This "species" occurs widely throughout the area, across the coastal plain, escarpment and plateau. Generally, it is a tree of deep, fertile soils, at the edges of rainforest and in moist gullies. It is particularly common between Mount Keira and Mount Kembla and can readily be seen along Cordeaux Road, Mount Kembla. It grows in association with *E. pilularis*, *E. quadrangulata*, *Syncarpia glumulifera*, *E. smithii* and other eucalypts and rainforest species of wet sclerophyll forest.

**BARK** Grey, shortly fibrous or tessellated to stringy. Persistent as a short stocking or the persistent bark may cover two-thirds of the height of the tree.

**LEAVES** Juvenile – opposite for 3 to 4 pairs then alternate, shortly stalked, lanceolate to ovate, 30mm to 60mm long, 20mm to 30mm wide, thin, undulate. Adult – alternate, stalked, lanceolate to broad lanceolate 100mm to 200mm long, 15mm to 50mm wide. Leaves often show lerp damage.

**INFLORESCENCE** 4 to 9-flowered umbels on flattened peduncles in forks of leaves. Buds – calyx tube cylindrical. Operculum hemispherical with a short beak. Flowers January to March.

**FRUIT** Cylindrical or bell-shaped, 6mm to 10mm long, 5mm to 8mm wide, stalkless or shortly stalked. Valves enclosed or exserted.