

NZ Myrtaceae Key - Online edition

Eucalyptus perriniana F.Muell. ex Rodway

Common Names

spinning gum

Origin

Australia: subalpine situations in south-eastern New South Wales, south into eastern Victoria, and at lower altitudes in Tasmania.

Cultivation

In New Zealand cultivated very occasionally in parks or gardens.

Distribution

A few scattered records only, more from the South Island than from the North Island of New Zealand.

Distinguishing Features

- A small straggly tree with smooth bark, copper-coloured when new, then weathering to greenish or white, with a small amount of rough bark remaining at the base of large trees.
- Crowns of reproductive plants retain many juvenile leaves; stalked, lanceolate intermediate and adult leaves not always formed.
- Crown leaves dull, green to grey-green or slightly waxy grey-white, same colour above and below, opposite or alternate, blade broadly ovate to lanceolate, to 165 mm long and 52 mm wide, bases joined to leaf bases on opposite side of stem (juvenile leaves) or tapering to stalk (intermediate or adult leaves).
- Flowers in clusters of three, in leaf axils, often in axils of juvenile leaves, stalk of cluster short. Mature buds stalkless or stalked to 2 mm long, ovate, to 7 mm long and 5 mm wide, green to yellow to red under waxy coating, bud cap conical to rounded or rarely narrowly pointed, flowers white.
- Fruit a stalkless or rarely short-stalked woody capsule, cup-shaped or a short cylinder, to 7 mm long and 8 mm wide, usually waxy grey-white, disc a raised ring, level with or slightly descending inside the rim, valves 3 to 5, near rim level.

Habit

A small straggly tree or multi-stemmed shrub to 7 m tall.

Bark and Stem/Trunk

Bark smooth throughout, or rough only at base of trunks of largest individuals; smooth bark light coppery, weathering to greenish or white, shedding in ribbons; Young stems rounded in cross-section, branchlets usually but not always waxy grey-white with leaf ring scars. Hairs and adventitious roots absent.

Leaves

Adult leaves alternate, stalked, lanceolate, 80–120 mm long, 12–25 mm wide, tapering to stalk, tip pointed, dull, grey-green to bluish green, same colour above and below, vein reticulation moderate to dense, angle of side-veins to midrib greater than 45°, intramarginal vein parallel to and well removed from margin, with many large oil glands; leaf stalks to 17 mm long.

Juvenile leaves opposite, stalkless, heart-shaped for first 2 nodes, then with leaf bases joined to leaf bases on opposite side of stem for many nodes, the joined pair of leaves being elliptic to more or less round, 32–85 mm long, 50–80(–100) mm wide, grey-green or slightly waxy grey-white; dead juvenile leaves loosen from stem and spin around it.

Crown of reproductive plants retains many juvenile leaves; stalked, lanceolate intermediate and adult leaves not always formed. Crown leaves opposite or alternate, blade broadly ovate to lanceolate, 70–165 mm long, 12–52 mm wide, bases joined to leaf bases on opposite side of stem, or tapering to stalk, same colour above and below, dull, green to grey-green or slightly waxy grey-white; crown leaf stalks 0–17 mm long.

Flowers

Flowers in clusters of three, in leaf axils, often in axils of juvenile leaves, stalk of cluster to 2–5 mm long. Mature buds stalkless or stalked to 2 mm long, ovate, 6–7 mm long, 4–5 mm wide, green to yellow to red under waxy coating, bud cap conical to rounded or rarely narrowly pointed, flowers (stamens) white; in mature open flowers, petals and sepals absent. Main flowering period: summer to early autumn.

Fruit

Capsules woody, stalkless or rarely short-stalked to 2 mm, cup-shaped or a short cylinder, 4–7 mm long, 5–8 mm wide, usually waxy grey-white; disc a raised ring, level with or slightly descending inside the rim, valves 3–5, near rim level.

Similar Species

Eucalyptus gunnii, *E. cordata* and *E. perriniana* are in a group of eucalypts with orbicular to heart-shaped juvenile leaves that are opposite for many nodes, have a grey-green to blue-green tree crown, and buds in threes. These three species all have smooth bark. Capsules are usually waxy grey-white, cup-shaped or cylindrical.

- *E. perriniana* is easily recognised by the joined pairs of dull blue-green to grey-green juvenile leaves that occur invariably somewhere in the crown of a mature tree, or where the crown only has fully adult, stalked, lanceolate leaves, then joined juveniles can usually be found on coppice growth nearby. The crowns of well-developed small trees eventually mature to slightly glossy green, typically lanceolate adult leaves. *Eucalyptus perriniana* has smooth bark that is copper-coloured when new, weathering to greenish or white, with a small amount of rough bark remaining at the base of large trees.
- *E. gunnii* sometimes has up to one metre of rough bark at the base, the smooth bark is usually mottled, and branchlets are often conspicuously waxy grey-white. Juvenile leaves are broadly round to heart-shaped, grey-green or waxy grey-white, the margin smooth or scalloped. The crown often has conspicuously waxy grey-white new growth amongst grey-green to blue-green, more lanceolate adult foliage. Capsules are cylindrical to barrel-shaped, often slightly contracted below rim.
- The bark of *E. cordata* is mottled, branchlets usually waxy grey-white. The crown of *E. cordata* has waxy grey-white, stalkless, stem-clasping, juvenile leaves or a mixture of juvenile and intermediate leaves, and occasionally adult leaves at top of the crown. Leaf margins may be scalloped.

Eucalyptus tenuiramis also has opposite, stalked, waxy grey-white intermediate leaves in the crown, and juvenile leaves that are joined across the stalk to the leaf on the opposite side. Both have smooth bark throughout, but bark of *E. tenuiramis* is white to light grey or yellowish, whereas bark of *E. perriniana* is copper-coloured when new, weathering to greenish or white. Flower buds and capsules of *E. perriniana* are distinctive, in clusters of 3, whereas *E. tenuiramis* has buds in clusters of 9–15 or more.

Notes

Eucalyptus is a genus of nearly 800 species, most of which are endemic to Australia, with a few species extending to parts of Malesia and as far north as the Philippines.

External Links

- [EUCLID](#)
- Flora of Australia
- GBIF (as *Eucalyptus perriniana* Herb.Perrin ex Maiden)
- iNaturalist NZ
- PlantNET: New South Wales Flora Online
- Plants of South Eastern New South Wales
- VicFlora: Flora of Victoria

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