

# *Eucalyptus mannifera* subsp. *mannifera* brittle gum; red spotted gum

subgenus: *Symphomyrtus*; section: *Maidenaria*; series: *Microcarpae*

**AUTHORITY:** *Eucalyptus mannifera* Mudie, *Trans. Roy. Med. Bot. Soc. London* 1(3), 24 (1834).

Type: Bathurst, N.S.W., Jan. 1825, *A. Cunningham 91* (holo: K; iso: BM).

Syn. *E. mannifera* subsp. *maculosa* (R. Baker) L. Johnson, *Cont. New South Wales Natl Herb.* 3, 107 (1962). T: Charleys Forest, Monga, N.S.W., Sept. 1898, *W. Bauerlen s.n.* (lecto: NSW 54074) *vide* Johnson (1962).

**NAME:** From the Greek *manna* (the gum of a tree) and *fera* meaning bearing, referring to the gum occasionally exuded from the bark of the species (common to many eucalypts).

**DESCRIPTION:** Tree 6 to 30 metres tall, usually single-stemmed, forming an inconspicuous lignotuber. Bark smooth throughout, usually powdery, streaked pale grey over pale yellowish cream to white. Juvenile leaves variable in width, linear to lanceolate (5 to 15 mm wide), dull, blue-green. Adult leaves 10 to 15 mm wide, dull, blue-green. Buds and fruits occurring in groups of 7. Buds on pedicels, with a bluntly conical operculum. Flowers white, occurring in summer. Fruits 4 to 6 mm wide, cup-shaped to rounded, with a level to ascending disc and valves slightly exserted.

**DISTRIBUTION & HABITAT:** *Eucalyptus mannifera* subsp. *mannifera* is of widespread but scattered occurrence in north-eastern Victoria, from near coastal hills in the Orbost area of east Gippsland across the alpine areas to Mt Buffalo and near Beechworth, extending into New South Wales mainly along the western slopes and tablelands of the Great Dividing Range as far north as the Rylstone area. In Victoria, the species occurs in hilly to mountainous terrain at medium altitudes on well-drained slopes and ridges in woodland or forest vegetation with a variety of other eucalypt species.

**CULTIVATION & USES:** Widely cultivated in southern and eastern Australia, where it is grown as an ornamental tree for its pale, smooth-barked stems and its relatively open crown of blue-green, willowy leaves. Suited to most well drained soils in areas of moderate rainfall. Moderately drought and frost tolerant.

It is possible that the recently popularised seedlings sold in nurseries as *Eucalyptus mannifera* 'Patches' is a smaller growing selection originating from the Gippsland area.

**NOTES:** An attractive species distinctive in its smooth pale bark, dull blue-green leaves, and small buds and fruits in groups of sevens.

*Eucalyptus mannifera* subsp. *mannifera* is distinguished from subsp. *gullickii* (swamp brittle gum), of the central tablelands of N.S.W., in the narrower juvenile leaves (elliptical juvenile leaves in subsp. *gullickii*) and the more rounded fruits (obconical in subsp. *gullickii*).

Populations of *E. mannifera* from the Goulburn to Canberra region of N.S.W. have been known as subsp. *maculosa* because of their variably narrower juvenile and adult leaves. Such variability occurs throughout the range of *E. mannifera* and thus subsp. *maculosa* is not recognised as distinct here.

Closely related to the commonly cultivated *E. scoparia* (Wallangarra white gum), a rare species from the border region of Queensland and N.S.W., differing from the latter only in the dull, blue-green juvenile and adult leaves (glossy and green juvenile and adult leaves in *E. scoparia*).

