# Eucalypts of the City of Whittlesea

**Protecting Biodiversity on private land series**

## Eucalypts of the City of Whittlesea

Eighteen species of eucalypts are indigenous to the City of Whittlesea, occurring across the municipality where they are the dominant trees of the woodland and forest communities.

Eucalypts are also commonly found along rural roadsides, river corridors and as isolated paddock trees in largely cleared agricultural areas.

## Eucalypts: distinctly Australian

* There are approximately 700 species in Australia, 100 of which are indigenous to Victoria.
* Mature River Red Gums in an open grassy environment are recognised as one of the most important visual features of Whittlesea’s local landscape. They are afforded special protection, being both culturally and environmentally significant.
* The world’s tallest flowering plant Mountain Ash (Eucalyptus regnans), is recorded in the damp forests in the far north-east of the municipality.
* The flowers are pollinated by a range of animals including microbats, mammals, insects as well as being wind pollinated.
* Hollows form in the trunks and branches of large eucalypts, providing valuable habitat for local wildlife. Trees typically need to be 80-100 years old before they are large enough to be able to form hollows.
* Hollows can be used by bees with many types of honey being collected from eucalypts, both by Aboriginal communities and apiarists.
* Eucalypts provided many uses for Aboriginal communities, with bark used for making canoes and shields and the wood for weapons.
* Southern Blue Gum Eucalyptus globulus, which is not indigenous to the Whittlesea area, is the primary source of eucalyptus oil production around the world.

## River Red Gums: An iconic species in Whittlesea

The majestic River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) with their massive trunk, gnarled appearance, heavy twisting branches and broad open canopy are an important natural feature of the Whittlesea landscape. Many large old trees are estimated to be 200-800 years old and have significant local heritage and environmental values.

Mature trees are particularly important in providing habitat for local wildlife through the formation of hollows in the trunk and branches. When a branch falls off, it creates a wound that allows air and water in, which over time begins to rot and may eventually form a hollow. Due to the sheer size of River Red Gums, the hollows formed can be very large and provide natural habitat for many species including possums, gliders, small marsupials, and microbats as well as parrots, lorikeets and cockatoos to name a few.

The City of Whittlesea’s River Red Gum Protection Policy recognises the intrinsic value of these trees in providing character and identity in the urban and rural areas of Whittlesea. They are afforded special protection in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

## Gum trees and eucalypts

Eucalyptus is the scientific genus for this iconic group of Australian trees, which are commonly referred to as “eucalypts”.

The term “gum tree” is widely used to refer to eucalypts however, for identification purposes, the term “gum” generally refers to the group of eucalypts that have smooth bark, which peels in large flakes or ribbons.

All “gums” are eucalypts but not all eucalypts are “gums”.

## Aboriginal uses of eucalypts

Eucalypts are one of the most versatile and widely used of all plants by Aboriginal Australians. The wood was often used to make weapons, shields and spear throwers as well as musical instruments such as knocking sticks and didgeridoos. The fibrous bark of stringybark trees was used to make coarse string for bags and fishing nets. The oils in some leaves were used to treat colds and chest complaints and the sap was used to seal burns and mixed with water to treat diarrhoea.

Some individual trees are particularly significant to Aboriginal Australians:

**Scarred Trees:** Trees that bear a scar where the bark has been cut, peeled off and shaped over fires and made into canoes or used for shelter.

**Maternity / Birthing Tree:** Very large trees that have been hollowed out at the base could have been used by local Aboriginal Communities for giving birth and also for shelter.

## Eucalypt regeneration: response to fires and floods

Fire and flood are important features of the Australian landscape and have been for thousands of years. For many Australian plants, including eucalypts, these events present a unique opportunity for the plants to reproduce.

Many species of eucalypt, particularly the thinner barked “gums” can be killed by fire of even a moderate intensity. However, the passing fire will create the perfect environment for the germination of seed in the soil by creating a nutrient rich ash bed with reduced competition and plenty of light. Thicker barked eucalypts can often survive all but the most intense fires and although they may be burnt, often re-sprout from buds under the bark along branches and the trunk, called epicormic buds.

Some eucalypts resprout from an underground root mass called a lignotuber in areas where plants have adapted to a frequent fire regime. These are called the mallee eucalypts and are usually short multi-stemmed trees. As their name suggests they are generally found in the Mallee region and not in the City of Whittlesea.

Flood events can also provide important cues for some species, particularly River Red Gums, as periods of inundation or sustained heavy rains create the necessary soil moisture levels to promote natural regeneration. Along flood plains, mass germination can often be observed following the recession of winter/ spring flood waters.

## Identifying features of the eucalypts

Identifying eucalypts can be difficult. There is often considerable variation within individual species, so a combination of features (leaves, fruits and bark) may be required to identify your plant.

**Bark**

The bark of eucalypts is highly variable and an important identifying feature. The bark can range from typical thin, smooth gum-type bark which is shed annually in large flakes or ribbons, to the persistent, rough, deeply fissured bark of the ironbarks.

**Leaves**

The leaves of eucalypts go through a marked transformation from the juvenile to mature plant. The juvenile leaves can sometimes be used as a key identifying feature when the plant is small and is too young to have any buds or fruit and the bark has not fully developed. Juvenile leaves also appear on epicormic shoots of mature trees from the trunk and branches following fire or if the tree is otherwise damaged. Juvenile leaves tend to be opposite and sessile (stalkless), whereas adult leaves tend to be stalked and alternate in arrangement.

**Buds and Fruit**

The number of buds in a cluster can vary even within a species so use the number as a guide only and combine with other characteristics to identify your species.

As the bud matures, the top drops off to reveal the flower. Following fertilisation, the bud expands to become a woody capsule called the fruit, which encloses a number of seeds. Drying out of the fruit (especially after fire) causes the valves to open and release the seed.

The features of the fruit, particularly its shape, are extremely useful in identifying the species.

## Glossary

**Alternate:** Leaves borne singly at different levels along a stem (c.f. opposite)

**Axil:** The angle between the leaf and the stem

**Cap:** The top of a bud that falls off when the flowers open

**Elliptic:** Oval shaped, often with pointed ends

**Falcate:** Curved like the blade of a sickle

**Fissured:** Cracks or splits in the outer bark of a tree, usually in a vertical orientation

**Lanceolate:** Lance-shaped, broader toward the base and tapering to a point

**Linear:** Very narrow in relation to its length, usually with parallel sides

**Oblique:** When the two sides of the leaf base meet at different points on the midrib or petiole

**Opposite:** Leaves borne at the same level but on opposite sides of the stem (c.f. alternate)

**Ovate:** Egg-shaped with the broadest part towards the stalk/stem

**Round:** Circular

**Sessile:** Lacking a stalk

**Tube:** The base of the bud which turns into the fruit after fertilisation

## Identifying the eucalypts of Whittlesea

To assist with identification, this booklet groups species together based on similar bark characteristics of mature trees in the first instance. Once you have determined which bark group most closely matches your tree in question, read the descriptions and observe the photos for each characteristic to try and identify the species.

For some species the bark can be quite variable and it might fit into more than one of the groups: in this case you may have to work through the different groups to try and work out your species.

**Note:** Some eucalypts are also known to readily hybridise, making identification more difficult. Plants may have features of two species, for example the leaf type and shape of one species and the fruits and buds of another.

**Note:** Many eucalypts have been planted along streetscapes and have been used for revegetation. Some older revegetation projects may not have used plants local to the Whittlesea area so there may be some obscure species that you come across that do not fit any of the descriptions.

### Group A: Smooth-barked “gums”

Smooth bark dominates the trunk and branches (skirt of rough bark may be present at base of trunk).

### Group B: Rough-barked “boxes”

Bark with small shallow cracks, breaking into small flakes (scales) when rubbed; often tightly held to trunk and quite neat in overall appearance. Leaves often greyish.

### Group C: Rough-barked “peppermints”

Bark with short fibres and small shallow cracks, breaking into dust like particles when rubbed; leaves with peppermint smell when crushed; buds club-shaped, small and numerous (>11) per cluster.

### Group D: Rough-barked gums

Bark with short fibres and shallow to moderately deep cracks, soft/spongy or breaking into dust like particles when rubbed; leaves without peppermint smell; buds usually <11 per cluster.

### Group E: Stringybarks and Ironbarks

Bark rough, with deep cracks and either with long fibres or very hard, black and deeply fissured.

## Group A- Smooth- barked “gums”

### Sugar Gum

Eucalyptus cladocalyx (non-indigenous)

**Key features:** Leaves with dark glossy-green lustre one side and paler on the other; buds with elongated tube and small cap; fruit barrel-shaped with constricted opening.

**Habit:** Medium to large tree.

**Habitat:** Widely planted, introduced to City of Whittlesea, commonly naturalised.

**Bark:** Smooth with irregular white, yellow and grey patches

**Juvenile leaves:** Round to ovate, dark green, paler one side, to 6 x 9 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Broad lanceolate, glossy dark-green one side and paler on the other, to 15 x 2.4 cm.

**Buds:** Vaguely club-shaped with elongated tube and small cap, 7-12 per cluster.

**Fruit:** Barrel-shaped with constricted opening, longitudinally ribbed.

### Mountain Grey Gum

Eucalyptus cypellocarpa

**Key features:** Adult leaves very long and dark green; buds distinctly elongated with fine rib along tube; stalk of bud and fruit clusters flattened.

**Habit:** Medium to tall forest tree.

**Habitat:** Tree of damp forests on slopes and valley bottoms in mountain ranges.

**Bark:** Smooth, grey often with yellowish patches, shed in long ribbons often seen hanging in the canopy, sometimes rough at base.

**Juvenile leaves:** Broad-lanceolate to ovate, sessile and opposite, glossy dark green one side and paler on the other, to 17 x 8 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Long, lanceolate, dark green both sides, to 20 x 2.6 cm. Intermediate leaves very large to 35 x 5 cm.

**Buds:** Distinctly elongated tube with conical cap, usually one or two ribs along the tube. Clusters of 7 buds on a long flattened or angular stalk.

**Fruit:** Barrel-shaped often with 1-2 longitudinal ribs, clusters of fruits on broad flattened or angular stalks.

### Yellow Gum

Eucalyptus leucoxylon

**Key features:** Juvenile leaves opposite, grey-green, heart-shaped; buds in 3s on slender stalks; fruits cup-shaped, usually fairly large on distinct stalks. Juvenile leaves, buds and fruits greyish.

**Habit:** Medium to large tree.

**Habitat:** Woodland plains and Box ironbark Forests.

**Bark:** Smooth with pale shades of yellow, blue and grey, rough and dark at base.

**Juvenile leaves:** Broad or narrow heart-shaped, opposite and sessile sometimes fusing together at the leaf base, grey-green, to 9 x 6 cm.

**Adults leaves:** Lanceolate to broad lanceolate, green to bluish-green, to 20 x 2.5 cm.

**Buds:** Ovoid- to diamond-shaped on long slender stalks, held in threes.

**Fruit:** Cup- to barrel shaped on long slender stalks, often greyish.

### River Red Gum

Eucalyptus camaldulensis subsp. camaldulensis

**Key features:** Along water courses and plains; buds on slender stalks with distinctively pointed tip; fruit on slender stalks, ball/diamond-shaped with valves protruding.

**Habit:** Medium to large tree.

**Habitat:** Along water courses and swamp margins as well as the open plains.

**Bark**- Smooth and peeling in large irregular flakes, dull grey sometimes with cream or reddish patches.

**Juvenile leaves:** Broad ovate to lanceolate, greyish-green, to 26 x 8 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Lanceolate, dull/greyish green, to 25 x 2 cm.

**Buds:** Ovoid with distinctively pointed tip, held on slender stalks in clusters of 7-11.

**Fruit:** Ball-shaped with valves protruding, held on slender stalks.

### Swamp Gum

Eucalyptus ovata var. ovata

**Key features**: Poorly drained sites; leaves broad with wavy edges, buds diamond-shaped, fruit cone-shaped with flat top.

**Habit:** Small to medium tree.

**Habitat:** On lower slopes and alluvial terraces and fairly fertile plains, with seasonally moist or waterlogged soils.

**Bark:** Generally smooth cream-grey surface after bark is shed in ribbons, rough at base to varying heights.

**Juvenile leave:** Rounded, dull green with stalk, to 19 x 8.5 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Thick dark green, broad-ovate (sometimes lanceolate) with wavy edges, to 15 x 3 cm.

**Buds:** Diamond-shaped with conical cap.

**Fruit:** Cone-shaped with more or less flat top.

### Candlebark

Eucalyptus rubida

**Key features**: Bark smooth, white almost to ground, usually lacking ribbons in branches; juvenile leaves rounded, grey; buds/Fruits in 3s.

**Habit:** Medium to tall forest tree.

**Habitat**: Occurs on undulating hill and forest ranges on drier, shallower soils than E. viminalis subsp. viminalis.

**Bark:** Smooth, white almost to ground, developing red patches before peeling in summer. Usually lacks ribbons.

**Juvenile leaves:** Generally rounded, grey, opposite, sessile, to 4.5 x 5.5 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, green or grey-green, to 15 x 2 cm.

**Buds:** Ovoid- to diamond-shaped with conical cap, usually in 3s, sometimes glaucous.

**Fruit:** Mostly in 3s, cup shaped with protruding top (approaching ball-shaped), 6-9 mm

diameter.

### Manna Gum

Eucalyptus viminalis subsp. viminalis

**Key features**: Barks smooth, rough at base, ribbons hanging from limbs; juvenile leaves narrow-lanceolate, not greyish; buds/Fruits in 3s.

**Habit:** Small spreading tree to tall forest tree.

**Habitat:** Grows as a tall forest tree along mountain streams where soils are moist and well-drained but can extend onto ridges where it becomes a woodland tree.

**Bark**: Smooth and white with Ribbons hanging from limbs, rough at base to varying heights.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, green, opposite, sessile, to 15 x 3 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, mid-green, to 20 x 2 cm.

**Buds:** Ovoid- to diamond-shaped with slightly pointed cap, usually in 3s in the form of a cross (sometimes 7s).

**Fruit:** Mostly in 3s, cup-shaped with protruding top (approaching ball-shaped).

### White Sallee

Eucalyptus pauciflora subsp. pauciflora

**Key features**: Leaves with conspicuous veins running lengthwise.

**Habit:** Small to medium open tree with more than one main trunk.

**Habitat:** Grassy woodlands on moderately fertile soils of slopes and plains.

**Bark:**- Smooth to base of trunk, white or with grey, red, olive-green stripes and patches.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Ovate, grey-green, opposite then becoming alternate, to 7.5 x 3 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Lanceolate, glossy dark green, leathery with conspicuous veins running parallel to midrib, to 16 x 3 cm.

**Buds:** Club-shaped with slightly pointed tip, 7-9 (up to 15) per cluster, often slightly rough/warty.

**Fruit:** Pear- to cone-shaped with flattened top.

### Southern Blue Gum

Eucalyptus globulus (non-indigenous)

**Key features**: Leaves long, thick and leathery, juvenile leaves bluish-white and waxy growing on square stems.

**Habit:** Medium to tall forest tree.

**Habitat:** Planted, not naturally occurring in City of Whittlesea.

**Bark:** Smooth, peeling in strips giving shades of grey, blue, cream and brown, rough at base.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Large, ovate, silvery with waxy coating, opposite, sessile on square stems, to 15 x 9 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Long , lanceolate, thick and leathery, glossy dark green, to 25 x 2.4 cm. Some intermediate leaves can be very long, to 50 cm.

**Buds:** Large, cap warty with central knob, tube sometimes warty, 2-4 angled, usually waxy greyish/white. Depending on subspecies buds may be solitary, or in clusters of 3 or 7.

**Fruit:** Cone-shaped with slightly protruding top, 1-4 ribs, usually waxy greyish/white.

### Mountain Ash

Eucalyptus regnans

**Key features**: Sub-fibrous bark on lower part of trunk, but smooth and ribbony above. Leaves slightly oblique at base, juvenile leaves glossy green. Bud/fruit clusters often in pairs in leaf axil.

**Habit:** Tall forest tree.

**Habitat:** Tall forests on deep moist soils in cool mountain valleys between 200 m and 1100 m altitude.

**Bark:** Sub-fibrous on lower part of trunk (to 15 m), smooth and ribbony above.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Broad-lanceolate to ovate, green, glossy, to 17 x 8 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Lanceolate-falcate/oblique, green, to 14 x 2.7 cm.

**Buds:** Club-shaped, clusters often in pairs in leaf axils.

**Fruit:** Conical to pear-shaped, clusters often in pairs in leaf axils.

## Group B: Rough-barked “boxes”

### Red Box

Eucalyptus polyanthemos subsp. vestita

**Key features:** Drier shallow soils in foothill country. Leaves grey-green and ovate.

**Habit:** Small to medium tree.

**Habitat:** Drier shallow soils in foothill country.

**Bark:** Grey fine-scaly box-bark on trunk and large branches.

**Juvenile Leaves**: Rounded, notched at the end, grey-green, to 6.5 x 8 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Ovate, grey-green, to 9 x 3 cm.

**Buds:** Club- o r diamond-shaped with short cap, usually glaucous.

**Fruit:** Pear-shaped (to cone- or barrel-shaped) with thin rim.

### Yellow Box

Eucalyptus melliodora

**Key features:** Variable scaly bark and large, rounded, fine-textured (often greyish) crown.

**Habit:** Small to medium tree.

**Habitat:** Widespread, common on hills, foothills and plains, on loamy soils.

**Bark:** Variably scaly bark, yellow-brown or greyish, upper trunk and limbs smooth and gum-like.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Ovate-elliptic, pale grey-green both sides, to 11 x 5 cm.

**Adult leaves**: Lanceolate, light-green to slate grey, to 14 x 1.8 cm.

**Buds:** Club-shaped with short conical cap.

**Fruit:** Ovoid or cup-shaped with prominent stalks.

## Group C: Rough-barked “peppermints”

### Broad-leaf Peppermint

Eucalyptus dives

**Key features:** Leaves broad-lanceolate usually more than 2 cm wide, strong peppermint smell when crushed; juvenile leaves sessile, opposite, broad ovate to heart-shaped, greyish.

**Habit:** Medium to large tree.

**Habitat:** Common in lower-rainfall hill country on shallower soils than E. radiata.

**Bark**: Peppermint type, rough to the small branches, grey-brown, finely fissured and sub-fibrous, never stringy.

**Juvenile Leaves**: Broad-ovate to heart-shaped, opposite, sessile, greyish, to 12 x 7 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Broad-lanceolate, usually more than 2 cm wide, dark greyish-green, strong peppermint smell when crushed, to 15 x 3.3 cm

**Buds:** Small, club-shaped, 11-20+ per cluster.

**Fruit:** Pear-shaped (to cup- or cone-shaped) with flat top, slightly larger than E. radiata.

### Narrow-leaf Peppermint

Eucalyptus radiata subsp. radiata

**Key features:** Canopy crown has a dull green fine textured appearance; leaves have a strong peppermint smell when crushed; juvenile leaves opposite, sessile and narrower than E. dives; buds numerous in a cluster.

**Habit:** Small to large tree.

**Habitat:** Forest tree of ranges and foothills.

**Bark:** Peppermint type, rough to the small branches, grey-brown, finely fissured and sub-fibrous, never stringy.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, opposite, sessile, paler one side, to 18 x 3.5 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, thin-textured, strong smell of peppermint when crushed, to 15 x 1.5 cm.

**Buds:** Small, club-shaped, 11-20+ per cluster.

**Fruit:** Small, pear-shaped (to cup- or barrel-shaped) with flat top.

## Group D: Rough-barked gums

### Southern Mahogany

Eucalyptus botryoides (non-indigenous)

**Key features:** Rough bark; leaves glossy dark green, duller pale beneath, many close spaced parallel veins at wide angle to midrib.

**Habit:** Medium to large tree.

**Habitat:** Planted and naturalised, not indigenous to the City of Whittlesea.

**Bark:** Rough, thick, short fibred, brown-greyish, spongy/soft upper branches often smooth.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Similar to adult leaves but more ovate, thinner and often with wavy edge, to 15 x 8.5 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Broad -lanceolate, thick with glossy dark green surface above, duller pale beneath, many close parallel veins at wide angle to midrib, to 16 x 4 cm.

**Buds:** Elongated tube with 2-ribs and conical cap, clusters of 7-11 buds on flattened stalks.

**Fruit:** Barrel-shaped, almost sessile, clusters held on flattened stalks.

### Bundy

Eucalyptus goniocalyx

**Key features:** Bark greyish, hard, rough, coarse and scaly, persistent to small branches; juvenile leaves rounded, opposite, sessile, grey-green; buds elongated tube with conical cap, clusters of 7 sessile buds on broad flattened stalks.

**Habit:** Small to medium tree.

**Habitat:** Slopes, ridges and escarpments often in harsh rocky sites in woodland or forest.

**Bark:** Greyish, rough, coarse and scaly, often hard and deeply fissured, persistent to small branches.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Broad, rounded, opposite, sessile, grey-green, to 11 x 10 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Lanceolate, long and tapering, usually dark green with firm texture, to 20 x 3 cm.

**Buds:** Elongated tube with conical cap, usually with 2 longitudinal ridges, clusters of ~ 7 sessile buds held on broad flattened stalks.

**Fruit:** Barrel-shaped, sessile, clusters on broad flattened stalks.

### Coast Manna Gum

Eucalyptus viminalis subsp. pryoriana

**Key features:** Very similar to E. viminalis subsp. viminalis but with rough bark to larger branches; juvenile leaves narrow-lanceolate, green, opposite, sessile.

**Habit:** Small to medium tree.

**Habitat:** Various habitats, mainly on moister fertile soils and/or coastal grey sands.

**Bark:** Rough, sub fibrous, usually persistent to larger branches.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, green, opposite, sessile, to 15 x 3 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Narrow-lanceolate, mid-green, to 20 x 2 cm.

**Buds:** Ovoid- to diamond-shaped with pointed cap, usually in 3s in the form of a cross (sometimes 7s).

**Fruit:** Mostly in 3s, cup-shaped with protruding top (approaching ball-shaped).

### Yarra Gum

Eucalyptus yarraensis

**Key features:** Adult leaves elliptic to broad-lanceolate (smaller than E. ovata), glossy green both sides, edges broadly wavy; fruit pear- to rounded cone-shaped, small on distinct stalks.

**Habit:** Small to large spreading tree.

**Habitat:** Grassy Woodland on undulating terrain and lower slopes; fertile well drained loamy soils.

**Bark:** Rough, dark, sub-fibrous or scaly on trunk and larger limbs, smooth on small branches.

**Juvenile Leaves**: Elliptic, then oblong or ovate, green, to 8 x 5 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Elliptic to broad-lanceolate (smaller than E. ovata), glossy green both sides, edges broadly wavy, to 10 x 3 cm.

**Buds:** Ovoid to diamond-shape, small on distinct stalks.

**Fruit:** Usually 7 per cluster, pear- to rounded cone-shaped, small on distinct stalks.

## Group E: Stringybarks and Ironbarks

### Red Stringybark

Eucalyptus macroryncha

**Key features:** Fibrous bark usually deeply fissured. Buds with a smooth tapering (beaked) conical cap. Fruit with rim at widest part, disk domed-shaped, 3-4 valves strongly projecting.

**Habit:** Medium to large tree.

**Habitat:** Common and widespread on drier well drained ridges and slopes often on shallow soils.

**Bark:** Long-fibred, usually deeply fissured, fresh bark red-brown, weathered surface grey, persistent to smaller branches.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Ovate with wavy margin, stalk absent/short, green, one surface paler than the other. Early leaves roughened with tiny hair tufts, to 12 x 5 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Asymmetrical, lanceolate with oblique base, green, slightly glossy and sometimes paler one side, to 15 x 2.5 cm.

**Buds:** Diamond-shaped with Smooth tapering (beaked) conical cap.

**Fruit:** Ball-shaped, rim at widest part, three sharp valves strongly projecting, short stalk.

### Messmate Stringybark

Eucalyptus obliqua

**Key features:** Common, widespread, Stringy bark with dark green, oblique leaves. Fruit barrel-glass-shaped.

**Habit:** Medium to large forest tree.

**Habitat:** Widespread, on better quality soils of higher rainfall areas.

**Bark:** Fibrous and stringy to the smaller branches, fissured to varying degrees, brown-greyish.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Broadly falcate and oblique, green, glossy, without hairs.

**Adult leaves:** Broadly lanceolate, curved (falcate), asymmetrical and oblique at base, thick, glossy dark green.

**Buds:** Club-shaped, 7-11 (up to 19) per cluster.

**Fruit:** Barrel-shaped with short stalk.

### Red Ironbark

Eucalyptus tricarpa subsp. tricarpa

**Key features:** Bark hard, dark brown to black, thick, deeply fissured to small branches. Buds and fruit hanging on long slender pedicles, fruit barrel-shaped or cup-shaped.

**Habit:** Small to medium tree.

**Habitat:** Ridges and slopes on poor often shallow stony soils.

**Bark:** Hard, dark brown to black, thick, deeply fissured to small branches.

**Juvenile Leaves:** Lanceolate(-ovate), dull green, to 15 x 2 cm.

**Adult leaves:** Lanceolate, dull green, to 14 x 1.8 cm.

**Buds:** Club to diamond-shaped, cap conical, hanging in three on long stalks.

**Fruit:** Barrel- to cup-shaped hanging on long stalk.

### If you have reached this point and not found your eucalypt, it could be for a number of reasons:

a) You have misapplied the key (have another go)

b) You have found an eucalypt not previously recorded in the area \*

c) You have found a eucalypt not listed in this key (never get rid of the plant until you know what it is) \*

\* Email photographs to sustainability@whittlesea.vic.gov.au and we’ll identify it for you

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Images sourced from Natureshare ([www.natureshare.org.au](http://www.natureshare.org.au)), private collections and City of Whittlesea collection.

### Further Reading

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