



# GROWING & KNOWING **EUCALYPTS**

BY JOHN MASON AND STAFF OF ACS DISTANCE EDUCATION

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# CHAPTER 1 CLASSIFICATION OF EUCALYPTS

There are around 800 species of Eucalypts known to exist, and acknowledged by at least some experts; although the overall classification and naming of the Eucalypts species has been, and continues to be uncertain. Not all experts agree.

Originally, when first named in 1789, all Eucalypts were classified into the same genus; "*Eucalyptus*". In 1797 seven of the species (all native to NSW or Qld) were split off and placed in a different genus that was given the name "*Angophora*".

The main and most obvious differences:

- *Eucalyptus*: flowers have no petals; flower buds have an operculum (i.e. cap).
- *Angophora*: flowers have tiny petals; flower buds have no operculum.

**Note:** the operculum on a eucalypt flower bud detaches as the flower opens. You may differentiate angophoras from

eucalypts by the presence of large numbers of bud caps on the ground, under a tree, when it is flowering.

In 1934 W. F. Blakely (from the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens), classified *Eucalyptus* into 606 different species and varieties; in 1971, L.D. Pryor and L.A.S. Johnson revised Blakely's classification and divided the genus into seven sub genera. This work was not formally published though.

Some authorities followed seven subgenera, while others acknowledged more than seven; and up to thirteen. Up to six of these 13 subgenera are represented by only one species each; and as such are not particularly significant across the entire genus.







*Eucalypts in the arid Pilbara region of Western Australia, near Exmouth.*



*Eucalyptus cinerea*



*Corymbia citriodora*

### Subgenera Included:

- Subgenus *Corymbia*: These are the Bloodwoods (e.g. *E. calophylla*, *E. ficifolia*, *E. citriodora*, *E. maculata*). Many authorities now consider these to be the genus *Corymbia*; though others may still call them *Eucalyptus*.
- Subgenus *Blakella*: These are the Ghost Gums. They have tessellated bark (e.g. *E. tessellaris*). Many authorities now consider them to be the genus *Corymbia*. Some consider them to be another genus "*Blakella*"; and yet other may still consider them to be *Eucalyptus*.
- Subgenus *Symphyomyrtus*: The largest subgenus of *Eucalyptus*. Species in this subgenus tend to be hardier and more adaptable than species in the subgenus *Eucalyptus*, e.g. *E. deanei*, *E. grandis*, *E. botryoides*, *E. robusta*, *E. notabilis*, *E. cladocalyx*, *E. occidentalis*.
- Subgenus *Eucalyptus* (formerly *Monocalyptus*): This is the second largest subgenus of *Eucalyptus*. *E. rubiginosa*, *E. irritans*, *E. contracta*, *E. muelleriana*, *E. macrohyncha*, *E. eugenioides*, *E. elata*, *E. dives*, *E. regnans*, *E. obliqua*.
- Subgenus *Eudesmia*: e.g. *E. erythrocorys*, *E. tetragona*.
- Subgenus *Leprolaena*: e.g. *E. miniata*, *E. lirata*, *E. baileyana*.
- Subgenus *Telocalyptus*: includes *E. deglupta*, *E. curtsii*, *E. macrohyncha*, *E. radiata*.