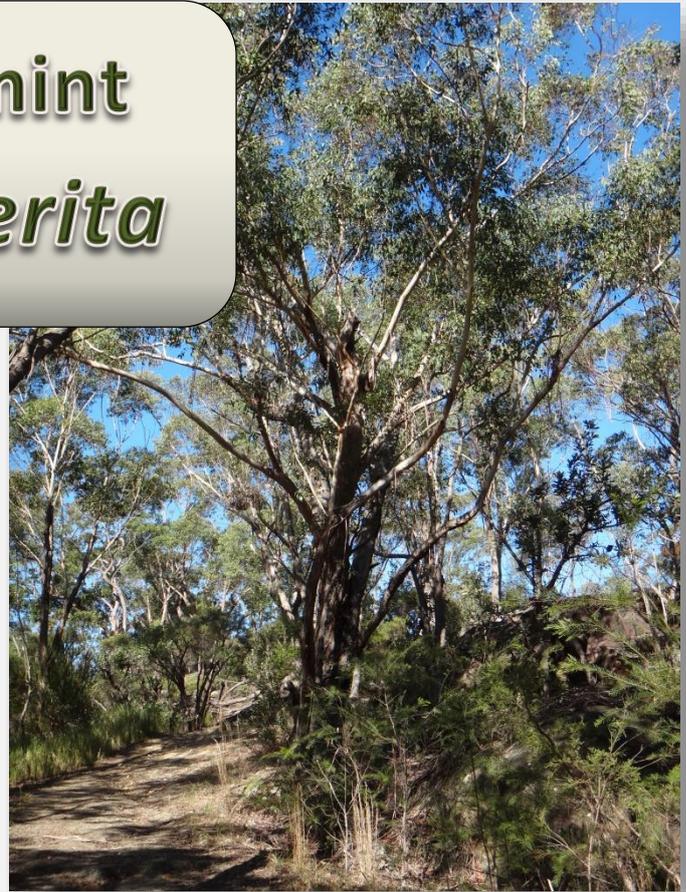


# Sydney Peppermint

## *Eucalyptus piperita*

*Eucalyptus piperita*, the Sydney Peppermint, is one of the most common eucalypts in the Sydney region. Trees grow to 20 metres tall on sandstone on the sides of gullies and ridges, but rarely on ridge tops or along creek and river banks. The bark is a typical peppermint bark, grey, shortly fibrous, crumbly rather than stringy. The upper branches are quite smooth, characteristically nearly always adorned by long ribbons of shedding bark. Sydney Peppermints only occur in NSW from near Bodalla in the south to Napiac in the north.



Crush and smell a leaf. What do you notice? The characteristic *Eucalyptus* smell is masked by peppermint! In 1788, Surgeon General John White and Surgeon Dennis Conisden of the First Fleet, distilled oil from Sydney Peppermints as a substitute for peppermint oil from the English *Mentha x piperita*. Specimens of *E. piperita* were collected by White and sent to England where the species was formally described by botanist James Edward Smith. Smith called the tree *E. piperita* because of the similarity of its scent to that of English peppermint.

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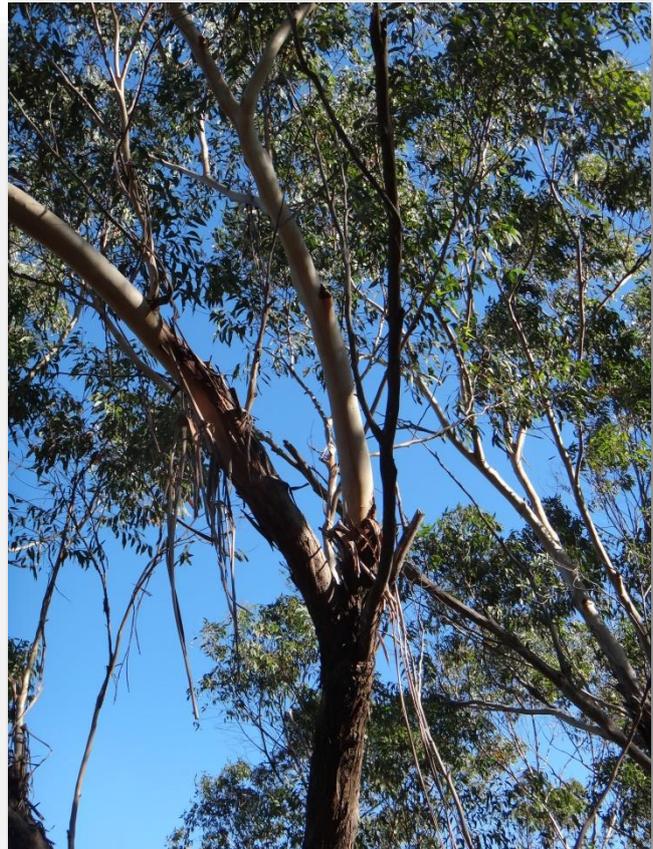
*Eucalyptus piperita* from Surgeon General John White's *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales* 1790.

The essential oil from *E. piperita* was used for colic and gut problems; however, there is a need for caution as English Peppermint contains *menthol* and *menthone* whereas *E. piperita* contains *piperitone*, considered to be much more toxic

Look for Sydney Peppermints in the gullies of Lane Cove National Park on the northern side of the university campus. .



Typical *peppermint* bark – fibrous but crumbly rather than stringy.



Upper branches of *Eucalyptus piperita* are smooth with long ribbons of shedding bark

Wikipedia:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucalyptus\\_piperita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucalyptus_piperita)

Wikimedia Commons:

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Eucalyptus\\_distribution\\_maps](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Eucalyptus_distribution_maps)

Christine A. Jones The Medicinal Properties and Bush Foods of Eucalypts.

<http://anpsa.org.au/APOL9/mar98-2.html>

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