

# *Corymbia clarksoniana*

## Clarkson's bloodwood

### Classification

Corymbia | Rufaria

### Nomenclature

***Corymbia clarksoniana*** (D.J.Carr & S.G.M.Carr) K.D.Hill & L.A.S.Johnson, *Telopea* 6: 259 (1995).

*Eucalyptus clarksoniana* D.J.Carr & S.G.M.Carr, *Eucalyptus* 2: 209 (1987). T: 7.6 km from Killarney, Qld, 15 Oct. 1980, *Clarkson* 3590; holo: QRS; iso: BRI, CANB.

*Eucalyptus dolichocarpa* D.J.Carr & S.G.M.Carr, *Eucalyptus* 2: 216 (1987).  
*Corymbia dolichocarpa* (D.J.Carr & S.G.M.Carr) K.D.Hill & L.A.S.Johnson, *Telopea* 6: 216 (1995). T: near Tryphinia, Qld., May 1971, *S.G.M.Carr* 1578; holo: BRI; iso: CANB, K, MEL.

*Corymbia ligans* subsp. *burdekinensis* K.D.Hill & L.A.S.Johnson, *Telopea* 6: 265 (1995). T: Queensland: hill above Burdekin Wilderness Lodge, c. 8km from Burdekin dam on Charters Towers road, 25 July 1990, *K.D.Hill* 3709 & *L. Stanberg*; holo: NSW; iso: BRI, CANB.

*Corymbia maritima* K.D.Hill & L.A.S.Johnson, *Telopea* 6: 261 (1995). T: Queensland: Townsville, Castle Hill, 22 Sept. 1950, *S.T.Blake* 18506; holo: NSW; iso: BRI, CANB.

### Description

**Tree** to 15 m tall. Forming a lignotuber.

**Bark** rough throughout, tessellated, grey, grey-brown and red to orange.

**Juvenile growth (coppice or field seedlings to 50 cm):** stem rounded in cross-section, hairy on early growth; juvenile leaves petiolate, opposite for ca 5 to 12 nodes then becoming alternate, petiolate, narrowly lanceolate to elliptical, 6–14.5 cm long, (0.9)1.2–5 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, discolorous, green, setae present on lower leaves.

**Adult leaves** alternate, petiole 1–2.2 cm long; blade lanceolate, 6–18 cm long, 1–3 cm wide, base tapering to petiole, discolorous, glossy, green, strongly pinnateveined, densely to very densely reticulate, intramarginal vein parallel to and just within margin, oil glands island or obscure.

**Inflorescence** terminal compound, peduncles 0.5–1.7 cm long, buds 7 per umbel, pedicels 0.3–1 cm long. **Mature buds** obovoid to pyriform, 0.7–1.2 cm long, 0.4–0.8 cm wide, slightly scurfy, scar absent (both opercula shed together at flowering), operculum rounded to conical to beaked, stamens inflexed, anthers cuboid to oblong, versatile, dorsifixed, dehiscing by longitudinal slits (non-confluent), style long, stigma tapered, or mop-like, locules 3 or 4, the placentae each with 3, 5 or indistinct vertical ovule rows. Flowers white.

**Fruit** pedicellate (pedicels 0.2–1.1 cm long), urceolate varying to barrel-shaped, when barrel-shaped with a slightly flared rim, 1.2–2.5 cm long, 0.9–1.6 cm wide, length always < twice the width, disc descending, valves 3 or 4, enclosed.

**Seeds** brown or reddish brown, 9–11 mm long, ellipsoidal with terminal wing, dorsal surface smooth, hilum ventral.

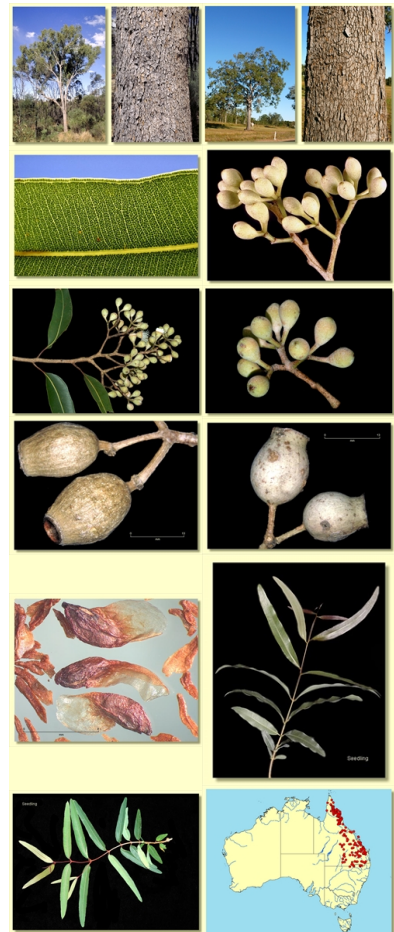
**Cultivated seedlings (measured at ca node 10):** cotyledons reniform to orbicular; stems rounded in cross-section, shortly setose until node 2–8 then smooth; leaves shortly petiolate, opposite for 6 to 13+ nodes then sub-opposite to alternate, narrowly lanceolate to narrowly elliptic-oblong, 7–13 cm long, 1.3–2.5(3.0) cm wide, base tapering, discolorous, slightly glossy or dull, mid-green above; lamina sparsely setose on lower side to node 2–8 then glabrous.

### Flowering Time

Flowering has been recorded in January, March, April, May, June, July and August.

### Notes

A medium-sized bloodwood tree occurring on inland plains in the far north of New South Wales and widespread through eastern Queensland north to ca 13° latitude on Cape York Peninsula, as a component of often grassy woodlands and forests on sand and sandy loam, but also may be on rising ground in skeletal soil. *Corymbia clarksoniana* is recognised by the tessellated bark over the whole trunk, discolorous leaves, terminal inflorescences, slightly scurfy buds, urn-shaped fruit never more than twice as long as wide, and winged seeds.



Juvenile leaves are lanceolate-elliptic and setose/scabrid on the lower stem and leaves only.

In Queensland *C. clarksoniana* is one of a group of five closely related species that are fully rough-barked, have leaves distinctly paler on the underside and have buds at least somewhat scurfy, not entirely smooth. Within this group *C. clarksoniana* differs from *C. polycarpa* in having much less scurfy buds and fruit that are urceolate, not narrowly barrel-shaped; *C. novoguineensis* differs in having plump-pyriform very scurfy buds, urn- to barrel-shaped fruit and prefers well-watered coastal lowlands, being restricted to the monsoonal zone on northern Cape York and the islands of Torres Strait; *C. plena*, a species of sandy inland areas from Hughenden to Tambo, differs in having  $\pm$  sub-globular very scurfy buds and thick-rimmed, stoutly urn- to barrel-shaped fruit usually larger than *C. clarksoniana* (but with some overlap in dimensions), and glabrous juveniles; *C. ligans* is similar to *C. clarksoniana* in having scurfy buds, but has narrow adult leaves, smaller and narrower barrel-shaped fruit and occupies rocky, more elevated sites. See table below for fruit comparison.

There are many other more distantly related bloodwoods with discoloured leaves and rough bark that occur throughout the wide range of *C. clarksoniana*. These are discussed below.

In north-eastern Queensland *C. stockeri* subsp. *stockeri* differs in having longer, narrower, glossy, setose juvenile leaves and often smaller fruit (0.8–1.3 cm wide); *C. stockeri* subsp. *peninsularis* has smooth-barked branches, non-scurfy buds and fruit and juveniles similar to subsp. *stockeri*; *C. hylandii* differs from *C. clarksoniana* in having narrow glabrous glossy juveniles, non-scurfy buds and smaller fruit; *C. nesophila* has smooth buds, much smaller fruit (only 0.6–1 cm wide) than *C. clarksoniana* and ovate-cordate prominently setose juvenile leaves to 2.4–8 cm wide; *C. rhodops* has smooth buds, flowers with white stamens and a conspicuous red ovary roof, fruit often larger than those of *C. clarksoniana*, and glossy, glabrous juvenile leaves.

Further to the south *C. lamprophylla* differs from *C. clarksoniana* in having smooth buds, very glossy adult leaves, glossy and  $\pm$  glabrous juvenile leaves and thick-rimmed fruit, whilst *C. hendersonii* has slightly larger fruit, smooth buds and glabrous juvenile leaves. *C. brachycarpa* has smooth buds, fruit much the same size as *C. clarksoniana* but very narrow glabrous juvenile leaves. *C. clandestina* has smooth buds and fruit smaller than *C. clarksoniana* and narrow glabrous juvenile leaves.

Closer to the coast *C. intermedia* differs from *C. clarksoniana* in having smooth buds, ovoid rather than urn-shaped fruit but similar in size, and at least some peltate juvenile leaves (juveniles never peltate in *C. clarksoniana*). *C. trachyphloia* differs in having smaller fruit, wingless seed and juvenile leaves with peltate leaf bases. In southern Queensland and northern New South Wales *C. gummifera* differs profoundly in having wingless seeds.

In EUCLID *C. clarksoniana* includes *C. doliochocarpa* and *C. maritima* as the differences are slight. *C. ligans* subsp. *burdekinensis* we also regard as synonymous with *C. clarksoniana*, with which it completely overlaps in fruit shape and dimensions and almost completely overlaps in adult leaf dimensions, although the juvenile leaves are a bit smaller in subsp. *burdekinensis* (but again with some overlap).

This table shows that fruit shape rather than dimensions is the best guide to these four related species:

Species	Fruit shape	Fruit length cm	Fruit width cm	Length: width ratio
<i>clarksoniana</i>	urn-shaped	1.2-2.5	0.9-1.6	1.1 to 1.8
<i>ligans</i>	elongated barrel-shaped, tapering distally, sometimes slightly constricted below the rim	1.1-2	0.7-1.2	1.4 to 1.9
<i>novoguineensis</i>	urn-shaped to barrel-shaped, contracted slightly in upper part with the rim slightly flared	1.7-2.4(3)	1.1-1.5(2)	1.3 to 1.7
<i>polycarpa</i>	elongated barrel-shaped	1.5–3.5	0.8-1.6	1.6 to 2.1

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#### Origin of Name

*Corymbia clarksoniana*: after John Richard Clarkson (1950-extant 2009).

John Clarkson began the first five years of his working life in Australia with the Agricultural Branch of the Queensland Department of Primary Industries in Brisbane. In 1974 he joined the Queensland Herbarium as a technician. He studied at night and graduated from the University of Queensland in 1977. In 1979 he was transferred to Mareeba on the Atherton Tablelands in far north Queensland. He has developed a keen knowledge of the plants of this area and is a prolific botanical collector, with many of his collections new to science. He is currently working with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, based in Mareeba.



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