



EucMedia

Hello, and welcome to EucMedia 6.

Malcolm French

Nov 2016

Well, it's been a

superb wildflower season

which has actually been a slight distraction out in the field on the eucalypt run, but a nice one!

In this edition of EucMedia, read about the adventures of *Team Eucalyptus America* in Australia, old and new eucalypt books, the species-rich *Hi Vallee Farm* north of Perth, and sadly, the passing of eucalypt icon Ian Brooker.



Muggon Station, north-west of Murchison

EUCALYPTING: *verb*

1. The act of passionately journeying for eucalypts.

By Kristen Nelson

On August 16, a group of seven Californians boarded a flight from Los Angeles to Sydney, embarking on a journey of a lifetime. The group consisted of two botany professors from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Drs. Matt Ritter and Jenn Yost; their two graduate students, Jason Johns and Kristen Nelson; and Dr. Ritter's wife and two kids – Sarah, May, and Abel Ritter. Australia is a bucket-list destination for many, but most people don't travel 'down under' in search of the adventure that this group sought... eucalypts of every shape, size, colour, and habitat. Akin to the activity of 'birding', but for botany enthusiasts, and eucalypt fanatics in particular, 'Eucalypting' is an activity that few people in the world can truly appreciate. Over the course of five weeks, this band of Californian gum nuts

travelled almost 40,000 km from California, across the Australian states of New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, and West Australia, in search of adventure and eucalypts.

Along the east coast, we drove south from the iconic skyline of Sydney Harbour to the sleepy coastal town of Kioloa, and then inland to the Australian capital of Canberra before flying to Adelaide. Of course, as we toured along, it wasn't enough to just observe and appreciate the scented trees we had come so far to see - we had to keep a record of each species we saw within its native range. With a heaping pile of reference guides and identification keys at the ready, our master list of confirmed species grew with every hike and wooded drive we took. But it wasn't until we got to Adelaide that the Eucalypting game took off in full force, when the group of seven grew to nine with the addition of Australian eucalypt expert Dean Nicolle and his wife Annett Boerner.



Eucalyptus tetraptera



Eucalypting in the Stirling Range of WA, with *Eucalyptus tetraptera* (four-winged mallee)

With Dean's ability to spot and distinguish newly-encountered eucalypt species equally well at 60 km/hour and at walking speed, the list from the first two weeks of travelling was more than doubled within two days of our arrival in Adelaide. Of course, our time in South Australia would not be complete without a trip to Dean's eucalypt arboretum at Currency Creek, where over 850 species of eucalypts can be seen growing together. Though none of these species were added to our list, since they were not growing natively, our time at Currency Creek was analogous to a group of kids being set free in a candy store. From Adelaide we hopped on another plane to Perth.

Up to the point when we arrived in Perth, we had already experienced what most would consider an extensive trip filled with wondrous exploration, excitement, and more than enough photos to take home... but the trip was less than half over, and we still had thousands of kilometers to

traverse. It was at Kings Park and Botanic Garden in Perth where we met Malcolm French, who gave our happy band of euc-fans the nickname *Team Eucalyptus America*. From Perth, all nine of us crammed into a 12-passenger van and toured Western Australia in two parts: a southern loop that hugged the coast through Yallingup, Margaret River, Walpole, Albany and Hopetoun; and a northern trek that started with an all-day journey across the wheatbelt and included stops in Kalbarri, Shark Bay, Coral Bay and Karijini National Park. We eventually made it all the way to Port Hedland before beginning the trek home.

West Australia was like a botanist's playground, with seemingly limitless diversity of orchids, wattles, members of the Proteaceae, and of course, eucalypts! The sheer vastness alone is enough to take your breath away, but the vistas, ancient rock formations, and pristine habitats of WA were the most impressive.



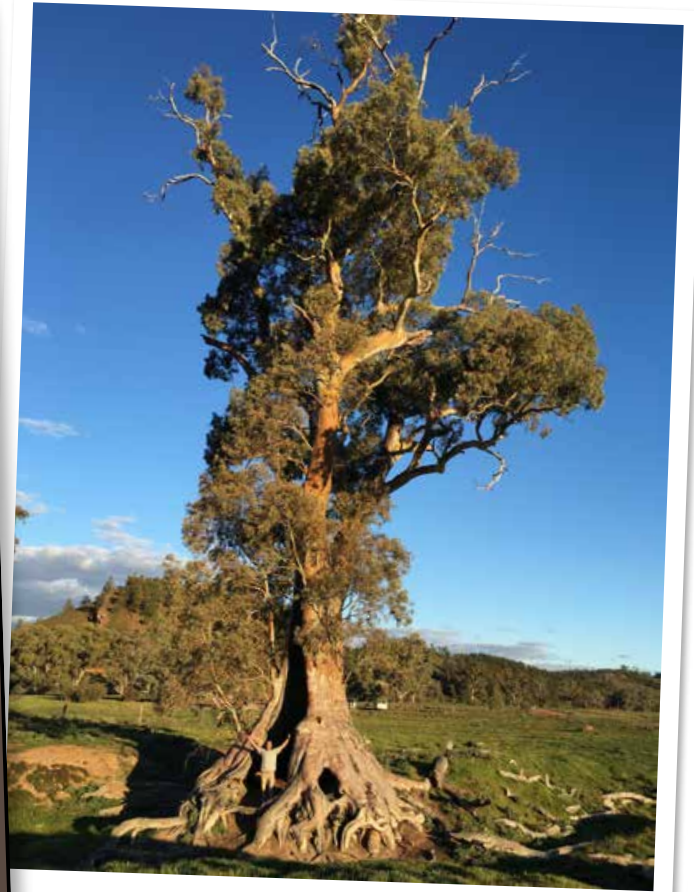
Some of Kristen's eucalypt souvenirs from Currency Creek Arboretum



Serious 'gum nuts' Malcolm French, Dean Nicolle and Matt Ritter in Kings Park, in front of a *Eucalyptus mooreana* (mountain white gum)

Though we were so far from home – so far from anywhere, it seemed – we mused at the familiar habitats and climate in the Mediterranean region of south-west WA and joked that if you blur your eyes a little, you might think you were still in California. The details of our daily adventures and the list of trip highlights from this five-week tour de force across the continent are entirely too numerous to recount, but the national parks of the Flinders Ranges, Stirling Range, Fitzgerald River, Kalbarri, and Karijini will not be soon forgotten.

In total, we documented sightings of 157 different species of eucalypts in their native range on our trip list. And, while impressive, any gum nut knows that number only represents about 20% of known eucalypt species... so *Eucalyptus Team America* will be back for more someday soon.



The Cazneau Tree near Wilpena Pound, SA



Sunset in Karajini National Park, WA



Team *Eucalyptus America* with Dean and Annett in Karajini National Park, WA

Recently I was on the scent of

Eucalyptus concinna

and other eucalypts north-west of Dielmals homestead, south-east of Payne's Find. *Grevillea juncifolia* subsp. *temulenta* in full flower stopped me in my tracks.



Grevillea juncifolia subsp. *temulenta*



Eucalyptus concinna



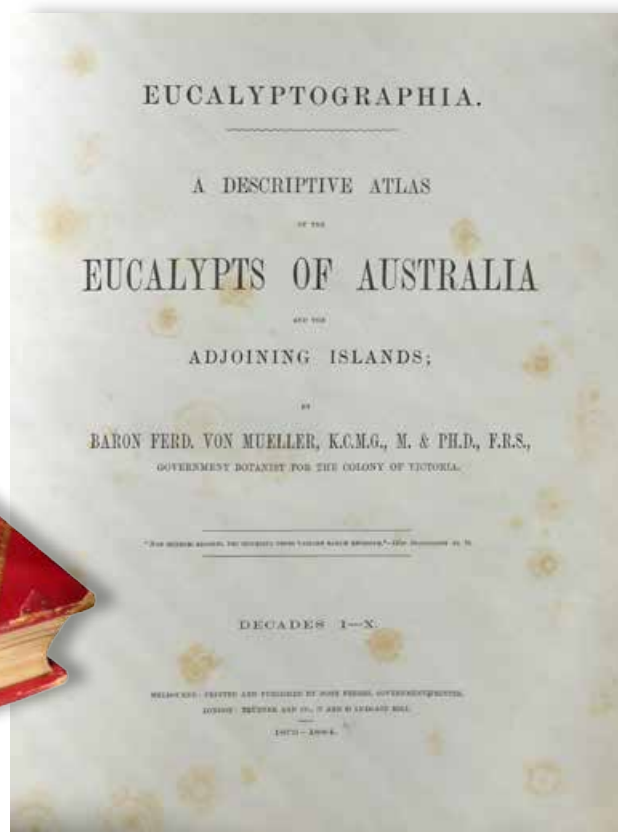
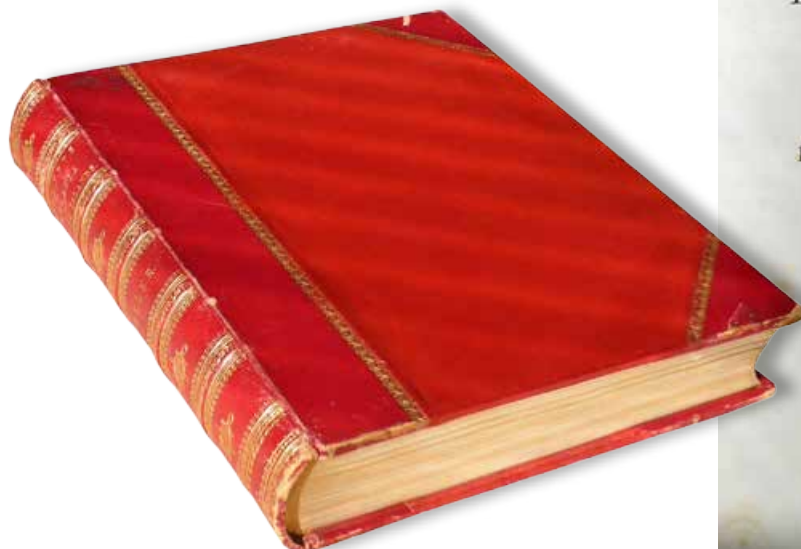
Do you expect to encounter Australia's famous Central Australian ghost gum,

Corymbia aparrerinja,

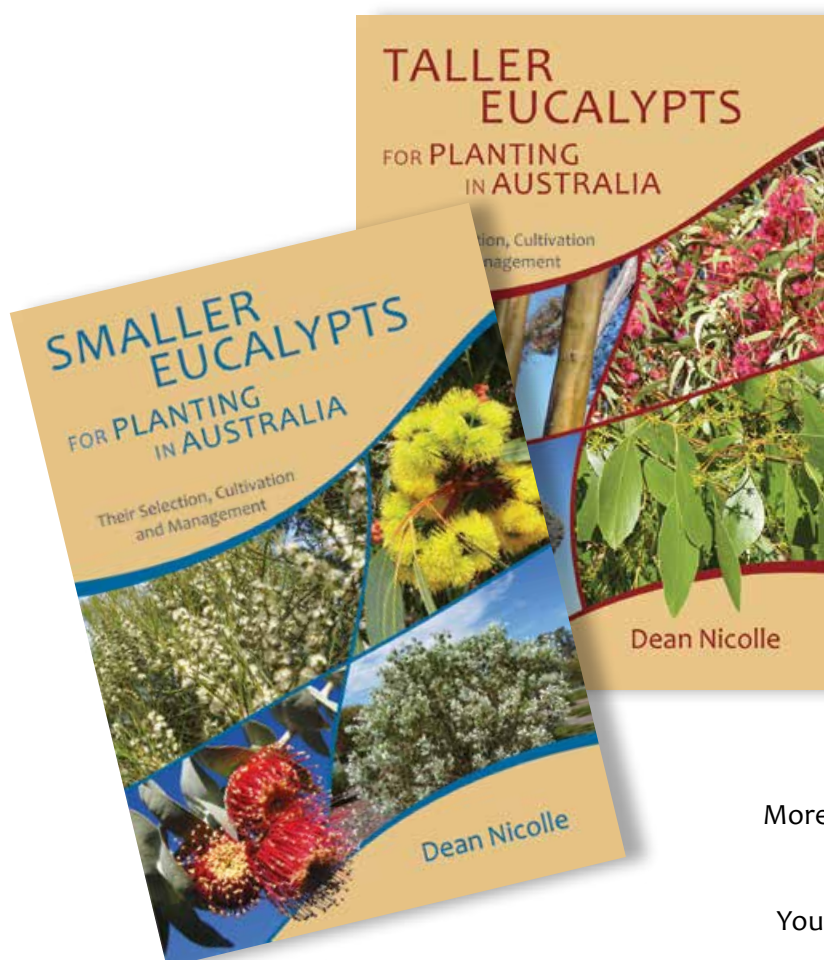
in the wheatbelt of WA? No, of course, but on invitation to visit Alan Southcott's farm west of Wubin: Surprise!

Eucalypt books

Alan Southcott also showed me a prized possession, an original first edition of **Ferdinand von Mueller's *Eucalyptographia***, published in 1884, possibly the 'holy grail' of publications in eucalypts.



Two fabulous new books on eucalypts for planting in Australia have just been published by **Dean Nicolle**.

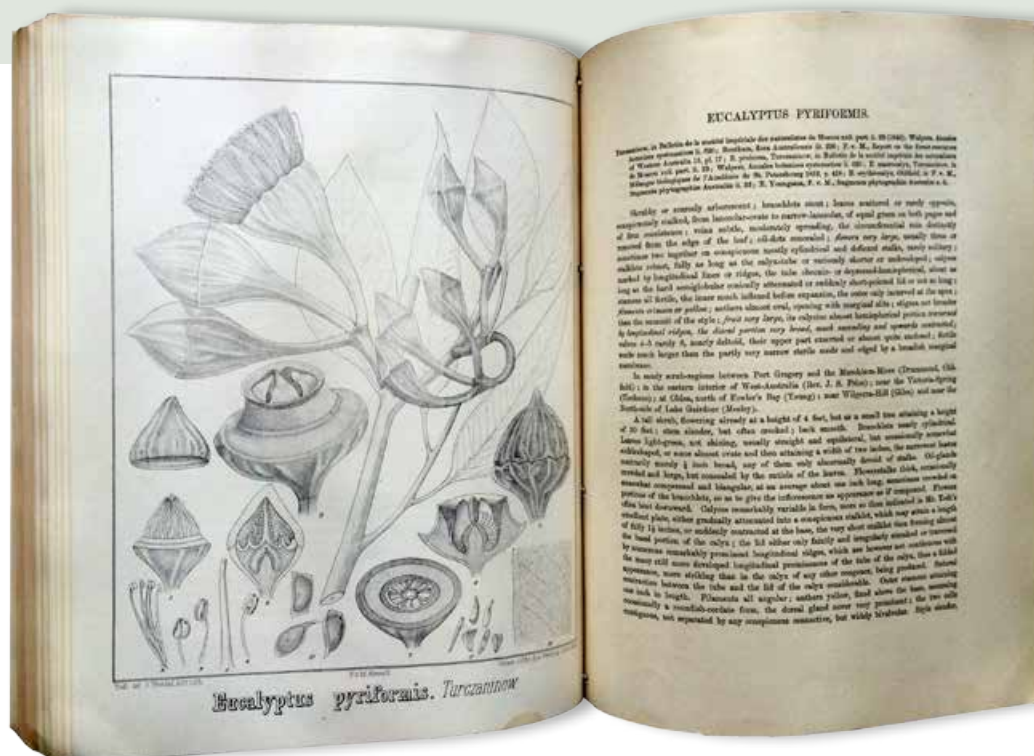


Together, ***Smaller and Taller Eucalypts for Planting in Australia*** treat 164 species suitable for growing in Australia. Many of these species are already commonly grown and seen in gardens, streets, parks and farms throughout Australia, while others are rarely planted but have vast potential for much wider use, both in the urban landscape and in rural areas.

Researched, designed and written for anyone interested in the identification, selection, growing, management, and appreciation of eucalypts in gardens, streets, parks, and on farms.

More information about the books is available on Dean's website www.dn.com.au

You can directly order the books under this link
[Order the books](#)



Eucalyptus pyriformis in *Eucalyptographia* (above) and in *Smaller Eucalypts for Planting in Australia* (below)

Eucalyptus pyriformis

pear-fruited mallee, Dowerin rose

Origin of name: from the latin *pyrus* (pear) and *forma* (form or shape), referring to its flower buds and fruits.

'Dowerin rose' is from the town of Dowerin in the wheatbelt of WA, where the species grows naturally.

Other names: kullingal.

Features: Mallee, 3-5 m tall, usually multi-stemmed from a lignotuber. Bark mostly smooth, shedding in strips and ribbons, often accumulated around the lower stems. Adult leaves oval-shaped to lance-shaped, 15-20 mm wide, dull, blue-green to green. Buds and fruits in groups of 3, held rigidly downwards on long, thickened, group and individual stalks. Buds large, multi-ribbed, sometimes waxy white. Flowers pink to red or pale yellow, occurring in winter and spring. Fruits funnel-shaped, very large (30-60 mm wide), with four distinct ribs and many less distinct ribs.

Natural distribution & habitat: Restricted to the northern and central wheatbelt in southern WA, from north of Geraldton to south east of Cunderdin. It grows on whitish to pale yellow sandplains, in open mallee shrubland vegetation.

Cultivation & uses: Occasionally grown by plant enthusiasts in Perth, Adelaide and western VIC for its large, down-facing, paintbrush-like flowers. The flowers are very attractive to nectar-feeding birds.

Eucalyptus pyriformis is a true mallee, and is best grown as a multi-stemmed mallee or shrub. The species requires a well-drained soil and prefers a full sun position and seasonally warm to hot conditions.

Management: A generally problem-free species. It grows slowly and with an irregular habit when over-shaded by larger growing trees.

Older plants that have flowered heavily over a number of years can become scraggy and heavy with woody

The 'large-fruited mallees'

Why plant me!

- Large, bird-attracting, pink to red or pale yellow flowers
- Large woody fruits for craft
- Drought tolerant

fruits, however the species responds very well to hard pruning of the plant, back to the lignotuber at ground level. The plant responds to such pruning by producing vigorous leafy regrowth from the lignotuber, which reaches about one metre tall within a year.

Similar species:

- E. youngiana* (large-fruited mallee), p. 209

A similar-looking mallee, differing from *E. pyriformis* most conspicuously in its erect held buds and fruits on shorter group and individual stalks, and its less funnel-shaped fruits, which are wider than long. It is naturally widespread on red sand in the Great Victoria Desert of WA and SA. The species is even more drought tolerant than *E. pyriformis*, but otherwise has similar uses, culture, and management.

'E. Nullarbor Lime'

A recently developed and widely marketed hybrid between *E. pyriformis* and *E. macrocarpa*, with pale yellow flowers and other features that are intermediate between its two parental species. It is sold as grafted plants (grafted onto a rootstock of *E. drummondii*). Unlike its parental species, *E. 'Nullarbor Lime'* cannot be pruned back to the lignotuber at ground level to regenerate the plant, as this would result in the loss of the hybrid leafy part of the graft (the scion), and regrowth of the rootstock species (*E. drummondii*) only.

Preferences

| Water | Soil | Soil | Temperature | Light |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| good-flow over | loam/clay | loam/clay | 15-25 °C | full sun, full moon |
| well-drained | yellow sand | light sand | 15-25 °C | full sun, full moon |
| poorly drained | acid | highly saline soil | 15-25 °C | full sun, full moon |
| alkaline substrate | loam/clay | mod. saline soil | 15-25 °C | disappears, full moon |
| very irrigated | clay | alk. saline soil | 15-25 °C | disappears, full moon |

For each of the species included in Dean's books, a double-page provides the following information:

- Height graph indicating its usual and maximum height
- Images of cultivated plants with an estimation of their age
- Images of the bark, foliage, buds, flowers and fruits
- Map of Australia indicating its natural and planted distribution
- Why plant me? overview
- Meaning and origin of the name
- Features of the species, including flowering times
- Natural distribution and habitat
- Cultivation and uses
- Management
- Similar species
- A table indicating environmental preferences and tolerances



We have some very special eucalypts in WA, with this little-known species, named by Ian Brooker in 1972, growing on a few breakaways in the Badgingarra area, north of Perth, *Eucalyptus pendens*.

Hi Vallee Farm

In fact 90% of all known individuals of *E. pendens* occur on one breakaway on Don & Joy William's *Hi Vallee Farm* north of Badgingarra. Incredibly, the natural bushland on *Hi Vallee Farm* contains 520 different plant species and still counting!



The very rare *E. suberea*. Most known individuals of this species are conserved on *Hi Vallee Farm*.

Ian Brooker, 1934–2016

While showing me the large population of *E. pendens* at *Hi Vallee Farm*, Don Williams recalled the first time he showed the population to Ian Brooker. Ian said he would be five minutes to inspect, but after two hours Ian returned, as he was so engrossed with the mass display

of the species. Sadly, Ian passed away recently. For many years Ian was the global maestro of eucalypt taxonomy and will be long remembered, having named so many new species and enormously advanced the study of all things *Eucalyptus*.



Any comments or questions,
please contact me at
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Happy eucalypting!

Regards, Malcolm French



Eucalyptus exilis,
another species
named by Ian Brooker.