PLANT FACT SHEET

Eucalyptus gunnii J.D. Hooker

GENUS *Eucalyptus* **FAMILY** Myrtaceae

COMMON NAMES Cider Tree, Cider Gum

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Sap, Manna

A cool refreshing liquid from wounds in the bark in spring is used as a drink. It is a substitute for maple syrup. The tree also produces an edible manna.

DESCRIPTION

A tree which grows to 18-25 m high. It spreads to 6-12 m across. It keeps its leaves year round. The bark is thin and smooth and reddish. It peels off in flakes. The young leaves occur in pairs and almost circle the stem. The young leaves are rounded and blue and these are replaced by sickle shaped grey-green leaves. The leaves are 7.5-10 cm long. The bark becomes green-white and this is shed to reveal new grey-green bark. The flowers are cream-white and occur in clusters or three. They have a hinged lid which opens to allow insect pollination. The fruit are small and urn shaped.

HABITAT

It is native to Tasmania in Australia. It grows in temperate regions but can grow in the subtropics. It needs well drained soils but can grow in wet soils. It can grow in full sun or light shade. It can stand heavy frosts. It grows near the edge of the tree line at high altitudes on dolerite mountains in Tasmania. It does not suit chalk soils. It suits hardiness zones 7-9. Tasmania Herbarium. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Trees can be cut back and regrow. Trees should be 3-4 m apart.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It forms hybrids with Eucalyptus subcrenulata and Eucalyptus dalrympleana. The tree can be tapped for sap when the trunk is 25 cm across. The flow of sap is best on warm sunny days. Tapping is done by drilling a hole about 5 mm deep into the phloem on the sunny side of the tree. A tube is inserted and a bucket hung below it. The sap can be boiled down to syrupy consistency.

NOTES

There are at least 500 Eucalyptus species mostly originally in Australia.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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