

## Tallowwood eucalyptus

*Eucalyptus microcorys* F. Muell.

Myrtle family (Myrtaceae)

Post-Cook introduction

A large tree 100–150 ft (30–46 m) high. Trunks large, usually 2–3 ft (0.6–0.9 m) in diameter, sometimes much greater, straight, up to two-thirds of total height. Crown compact, narrow, with main branches horizontal and smaller branches erect. Bark reddish brown or gray, soft, fibrous, becoming rough and thick, furrowed into long shaggy plates with thin layers of cork. Inner bark light yellowish brown, fibrous, almost tasteless or slightly bitter. Twigs slender, angled, light green and pinkish.

Leaves alternate, with slender yellowish leafstalks of  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (13 mm) or less. Blades lance-shaped,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ –4 inches (6–10 cm) long and  $\frac{3}{4}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches (2–4 cm) wide, curved, tapering to long point, base short-pointed with sides mostly unequal, thin, above green and slightly shiny, beneath dull green, with moderately visible fine straight side veins, drooping. Juvenile leaves opposite for 4–5 pairs, stalkless or short-stalked, elliptical to broadly lance-shaped,  $2$ – $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches (5–7 cm) long and  $\frac{3}{4}$ – $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches (2–3.5 cm) wide, pale green.

Flower clusters terminal (panicles) and branched or lateral (umbels) 1–2 inches (2.5–5 cm) long. Flowers 4–7 at end of slender stalk of  $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 inch (13–25 mm),  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch (15 mm) across the many spreading white stamens. Buds tapering to short stalk of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (6 mm) or less, club-shaped,  $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{5}{16}$  inch (6–8 mm) long and  $\frac{3}{16}$  inch (5 mm) wide, with small half-round or conical lid.

Seed capsules narrowly conical, tapering to short stalk,  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (10 mm) long and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (6 mm) wide, with flattened disk and 3–4 short valves often slightly protruding, light green.

Wood yellowish brown, shiny and rather greasy; very heavy (sp. gr. 0.8), hard, very strong and very durable. Moderately coarse texture, usually interlocked grain. Comparatively easy to work and easy to polish.

This strong, durable, easily worked timber has been in demand in Australia for many purposes including light and heavy construction, posts, poles, and railroad crossties. Very suitable for ballroom or dance floors because of the smooth greasy finish, indicated by the common name tallowwood. Rated as the best hardwood in New South Wales. It has not been used in Hawaii.

The Division of Forestry has planted more than 102,000 trees of this species, which was introduced in 1911. It grows exceptionally well at Kalopa State Park and in other areas where planted on all the larger islands. It is the most shade tolerant of the eucalypts in Hawaii and has often survived in a mixture with the taller, faster growing *E. saligna*. Not considered desirable for future planting because of the high density of its wood.

### **Special area**

Kalopa

### **Champion**

Height 145 ft (44.2 m), 9.5 ft (3.0 m), spread 65 ft (20.0 m). Honaunau Forest Reserve, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii (1968).

### **Range**

Coastal northern New South Wales and southern Queensland, Australia. Mixed with other eucalypts or as an overstory of rain forest. Equable summer rainfall climate. Planted in Africa, South America, and Asia.

### **Other common name**

tallowwood (Hawaii, Australia)

The specific name, from Greek words meaning “little helmet,” refers to the small lid of the flower.



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Twig with flowers and fruits, 1 X (Mueller).