

SCRIBBLY GUMS

- Notes:** 1. Leaf sizes are of leaves on non inflorescence (or reduced inflorescence) branches – but not regrowth branches after fire (these are often the broader intermediate leaves).
 2. Isolated trees or stands sometimes do not have the distinctive insect ‘scribbles’ on the bark.
 3. *E. racemosa* and *E. sclerophylla* are frequently of mallee habit on poor sandstone soils.
 4. All species have dull grey-green juvenile and intermediate leaves.

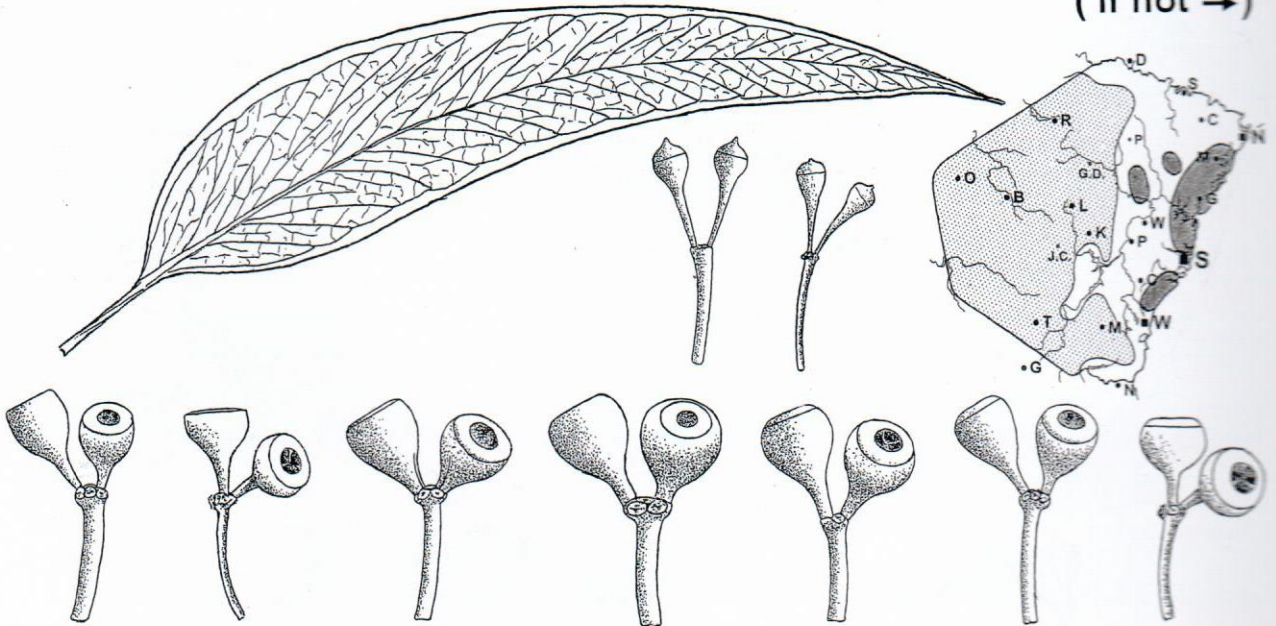
Discussion

There have been identification problems in the Scribbly Gums for many years, a great deal of hybridization seemed to be occurring between species in the group. For this reason a study was done in 2004 by Pfeil and Henwood to look more closely at this situation. The conclusion arrived at in the study was that the five current species should be reduced to two. This would be a large-fruited species – *E. haemastoma* and the small-fruited species combined under *E. racemosa*. This study was examined while preparing this manual but not followed for the reason below.

One of the main identification problems in the Scribbly Gums is that buds and fruit are mostly not consistently different enough to use as identification aids. For this reason distribution has, in the past, been relied on heavily to separate species in the group. This of course is not a satisfactory method. In preparing this guide various populations over a wide area of the Sydney region were studied and it was found that much of the ‘hybridization problem’ between the species had actually been the presence of *E. signata* in the Sydney area. This species was previously considered as occurring only as far south as Morristet (south of Newcastle), but quite extensive populations south, west and northwest of Sydney are clearly the same taxon as *E. signata* in north eastern NSW. The various Scribbly Gums had originally been named as separate species because they are clearly distinct from each other in the field. Hybridization and even intergrading is actually only occurring in some areas and if the above situation with *E. signata* is taken into account Scribbly Gums will generally key out quite satisfactorily. It can be noted that a close parallel with the Scribbly Gum situation, also in the Sydney area, occurs with the stringybarks *E. globoidea*, *E. oblonga* and *E. sparsifolia* (see notes pp. 30, 34). These have similar buds and fruit to each other which are not of much help in identification. Leaf characters, growth habit and soil type preference are the primary characters used. Hybridisation is common in areas where these three stringybarks overlap.

A Fruit (7)8-10mm diam. Non-inflorescence leaves 2-4cm wide.

(if not →)

*E. haemastoma*

Large-fruited Scribbly Gum

small tree to 15m tall in dry forest on sandstone soil – common

Note: uncommon and local south of Port Jackson – occurring in a few areas only