



## SARATOGA HORTICULTURAL FOUNDATION, INC.

15185 Murphy Avenue  
San Martin, CA 95046  
(408) 779-3303

DIRECTOR  
Lowell Cordas

Eucalyptus bauerana, blue box  
(Has been, but not correctly, spelled baueriana.)

The bark of the blue box, places it with the boxes, those eucalypts in which the trunk is covered with a rough bark of a sub-fibrous interlaced nature but the upper branches are usually smooth. Its blue-gray leaves give it the common name, blue box. Blue box is consistently rough barked from the the secondary branches, only the small branches are smooth. A small or medium-sized tree, it may reach 20m. (60 ft.) and it usually forms a rather dense round head. Juvenile leaves, opposite for several pairs, are petiolate and shaped much like the mature. Mature leaves alternate, suborbicular to broadly lanceolate, mostly 6-8 cm. (2 1/4 - 3 in.) long by 3-4 cm. (1 1/4 - 1 1/2 in.) wide, petioles slender, 2 - 4 cm. (3/4 - 1 5/8 in.) long. Umbels are 3-8 flowered, solitary in the leaf axils or sometimes several grouped together into a compound terminal inflorescence, resembling those of E. polyanthemos. Conical buds are narrowed at base to short stalks, the conical bud cap is usually shorter than calyx tube. Open flowers have white stamens. Capsules are sessile or nearly so, cone-shaped or pear-shaped, about 6-7mm. (1/4 in.) long, disk depressed within the calyx tube, valves enclosed or flush with the top of the calyx tube.

Eucalyptus bauerana is closely related to E. polyanthemos, the red box, from which it may be distinguished by its cone-shaped capsules, and its consistently rough bark on the trunk and branches, and pyramidal shape in cultivation (to 20-30'). Capsules of the red box are usually more rounded and trees are often smooth-barked. However, J.H. Willis, considers the differences between the two to be "trifling" and he states that where their distributions overlap in eastern Victoria "it is by no means easy to distinguish them".

Eucalyptus bauerana occurs in the coastal areas of southeastern Victoria, eastern New South Wales and southeastern Queensland. It is often found on loamy soils containing lime and frequently on river flats. Blue box usually has a good form with a rounded crown. It makes an attractive ornamental but has had only infrequent use in California as a tree for parks. It is tolerant of light frosts.

In Australia, apiarists claim that the honey made from blue box is clear, limpid and has a good flavor. Timber is pale brown, strong and durable but is difficult to split. Because it does not burn readily, it has been useful for fencing posts.

Eucalyptus bauerana was named for Ferdinand Bauer (1760-1826) who discovered it. Bauer was a botanical artist and draughtsman on the Flinders Expedition to Australia from 1801 to 1805. On the expedition he travelled and collected plants with Robert Brown (1773-1858) Their collections of Eucalyptus are among the earliest made of the genus.