

# *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* Dehnh.

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## MYRTACEAE (MYRTLE FAMILY)

### *Eucalyptus rostrata*

#### Eucalipto

*Eucalyptus camaldulensis* is native to Australia. Those specimens that originated in Peford and Gibb River, Australia, showed the best growth when planted in some areas of Central America and southwestern America (Lamprecht 1990).

*Eucalyptus camaldulensis* is a fast-growing tree 25 to 30 m in height and 1 m d.b.h. The crown is generally very sparse. The bark comes loose in the shape of rounded scales, producing a silvery grayish and reddish-brown shaft. The matte green leaves are lanceolate and alternate and measure 15 to 22 cm in length. The species adapts to a wide range of soils, from very poor to periodically flooded. It also grows in soils that are compacted by overpasturing or low annual humidity; however, growth there is not optimal. Changes in soil type within short distances result in very extreme changes in growth. In very shallow or compacted soils, radicular growth is hindered. The trees grow in temperatures ranging from 20 to 28 °C and elevations ranging from sea level up to 1000 m. In Colombia, the species has been planted where precipitation is between 600 and 2900 mm and it can endure 4- to 8-month-long droughts. It also endures moderately strong winds. It grows in vegetal formations of the Tropical dry to wet forest (bs/bh-T).

Traditionally, this strong wood has been used in heavy construction and for building interiors, wooden rollers, short-fiber pulp, paper, plywood, and agglomerate boards. It is used in cabinetmaking and carpentry and for crossbeams, transmission poles, firewood, and charcoal. It is also planted to shade and protect and to produce excellent-quality honey.

The fruit measures approximately 4 by 6 mm. The seeds are gathered directly from the tree and dried in the sun. Viable seeds average 348,000 per kg. The seeds can be stored up to 9 years if they are placed in hermetic containers at a temperature of 3 to 5 °C and a moisture content of 5.5 to 10 percent.

Normally, the seeds of this species present high germination percentages (greater than 90 percent) without pregermination treatment. Germination in the laboratory occurs in 5 to 16 days (Trujillo 1983).

About 60,000 plantules are obtained from 1 kg of seed in nurseries. The recommended substrate consists of two parts sand and one part soil, which must be disinfected before planting the seeds. Seeds must be sowed deep enough to prevent uncovering when watered, but they must not be too embedded. The plantules are lifted when they are 5 to 7 cm in height.

For all *Eucalyptuses*, the texture of the medium of germination must be fine. A fertile mixture of soils with sand in a proportion of 1:1 must be used. The seeds can also be planted directly into bags using special devices, such as syringes, to place two to four seeds in each bag. The germination period for this method ranges from 4 to 5 days. The plantules grow quickly and reach a height of 40 to 50 cm in 16 to 18 weeks. However, the stems should be pruned to induce more lignification. The plantules require periodic watering in the first stages of development and to prevent damping off, cupric fungicides should be applied.

Weeding and burning of underbrush are recommended before planting. In the first stages of establishment, the presence of underbrush, vertisols, calcareous soils, or sandy soils with low moisture retention limit growth. Recommended planting densities for firewood are 2,500 and 1,600 trees per ha; for other uses, distances of 4 by 4 m between trees are recommended (Martinez 1991). Attacks by defoliating ants, fungi, and cancer delay growth when the trees are planted in very compacted or shallow soils. Locusts and insects can cut trees of up to 3 cm in diameter. Young trees are attacked by many Lepidoptera larvae, termites, and borers, including *Gonipterus sp. scarab*.

