

# Syzygium australe

## COMMON NAMES

brush cherry

## SYNONYMS

*Eugenia australis* Wendl. ex Link

## FAMILY

Myrtaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Syzygium australe* (J.C.Wendl. ex Link) B.Hyland

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Large shrub or small tree to 10m; smooth, light grey bark; white petals; fruit 2x2.5cm, oblong to ovoid, crimson to purple (Webb et al., 1988).

## HABITAT

Terrestrial.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

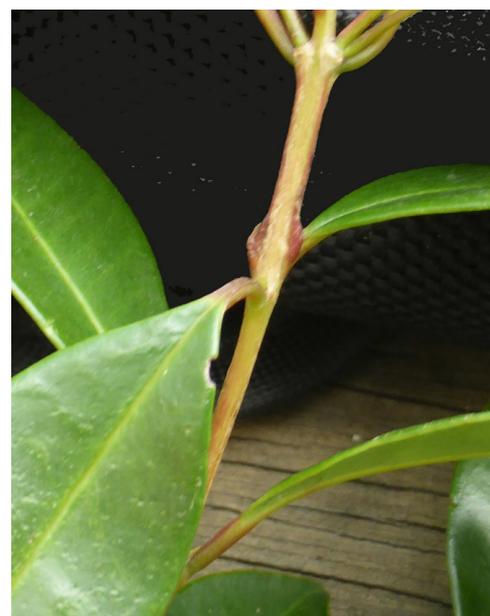
Large shrub or small tree to approx. 10m high; bark smooth, light grey; pneumatophores 0. Branchlets pendent, angular. Leaves aromatic when crushed; petiole < 10mm long. Lamina mostly 4~10 x 1~3.5cm, sometimes smaller near base of branchlets and below infl., often narrowly elliptic, sometimes elliptic or obovate, glossy, slightly undulate; veins numerous, conspicuous and parallel; base attenuate or narrowly cuneate; apex mostly cuspidate to acuminate, but sharply acute in obovate leaves. Cymes with 3~25 flowers, terminal or in the upper axils of short leafy branchlets, to about 15cm diam.; peduncles to approx. 4cm long; pedicels shorter, slender, angular. Hypanthium 4~6mm long at antithesis, obconic, generally dark red at least on exposed side; pseudopedicel hardly evident; calyx lobes 2~4mm long, broadly triangular-ovate, sometimes dark red, persistent on fruit. Petals around 4mm diam., free, suborbicular, white, caducous. Stamens to approx. 13mm long, white. Style generally = longest stamens. Fruit 1~2 x .7~1.5cm, oblong to obovoid, crimson to crimson-purple, usu. glossy. Seed 1 or few, large; cotyledons green. (Webb et al., 1988)

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to the Myrtaceae of New Zealand](#)



"Pockets" on internodes. Wellington Zoological Gardens. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 01/05/2009, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Node showing swellings on stem above; garden, Hawera. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 28/02/2018, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Syzygium paniculatum*. In NZ, *S. paniculatum* is sometimes sold erroneously as *S. australe*. The two can be distinguished even when young from the leafy twigs, which in *S. paniculatum* have smooth internodes above and below the nodes, whereas *S. australe* has its leafy twigs “generally 4-angled or shortly 4-winged, pairs of wings running down from each petiole but amalgamating and forming a pocket or hump above the next lower pair of leaves.” These can be seen in the photo on this page taken in Wellington Zoological Gardens.

[http://keys.trin.org.au/key-server/data/0e0f0504-0103-430d-8004-060d07080d04/media/Html/taxon/Syzygium\\_australe.htm](http://keys.trin.org.au/key-server/data/0e0f0504-0103-430d-8004-060d07080d04/media/Html/taxon/Syzygium_australe.htm)

*S. australe* appears to be a lot less common in cultivation than *S. paniculatum* and, compared with the latter, wild seedlings are uncommon in *S. australe*.

## FLOWERING

January, February, March, April, May, June, July

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. The fleshy fruit are distributed by birds (Webb et al., 1988).

## THREATS

This taxon may be prone to Myrtle Rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) is an invasive fungus which threatens myrtle species - learn more [myrtlerust.org.nz](http://myrtlerust.org.nz)

## YEAR NATURALISED

1983

## ORIGIN

Qld, NSW

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## ETYMOLOGY

**syzygium**: From the Greek syzygos ‘joined’, referring to the paired leaves

**australe**: Southern, from the Latin australis

## ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

**This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC.** 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/syzygium-australe/>

## PDF DATE

17 September 2024