

# Syzygium australe

## COMMON NAME

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

## BRIEF 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

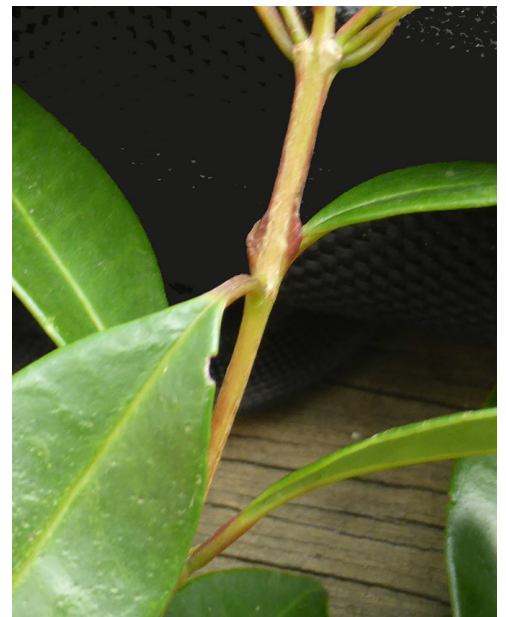
Large shrub or small tree to approx. 10m high; bark smooth, light grey; pneumatophores 0. Branchlets pendent, angular. Leaves aromatic when crushed; petiole < 10mm long. Lamina mostly 4~10 x 1~3.5cm, sometimes smaller near base of branchlets and below infl., often narrowly elliptic, sometimes elliptic 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

### MORE INFORMATION

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