

# FLORA OF AUSTRALIA

[🏠 \(/opus/foa\)](#) / [ROSANAE ☰ \(\)](#) / [MYRTALES ☰ \(\)](#)  
 / [MYRTACEAE \(/OPUS/FOA/PROFILE/MYRTACEAE\) ☰ \(\)](#)  
 / [BALAUSTION \(/OPUS/FOA/PROFILE/BALAUSTION\) ☰ \(\)](#)

## *Balaustion* Hook.

[Q ALA \(https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://id.biodiversity.org.au/node/apni/2916444\)](https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://id.biodiversity.org.au/node/apni/2916444)
[Q NSL \[legitimate\] \(https://biodiversity.org.au/nsl/services/apni-format/display/105513\)](https://biodiversity.org.au/nsl/services/apni-format/display/105513)

Options ▾

– Hooker, W.J. in Hooker, W.J. (ed.) (1852), *Icones Plantarum* 9: t. 852

PROFILE ()

DISTRIBUTION ()

GALLERY ()

LITERATURE & LINKS ()

KEY ()



### Nomenclature



✎ Hooker, W.J. in Hooker, W.J. (ed.) (1852), *Icones Plantarum* 9: t. 852 ()



### Etymology



Top

An old name for the flowers of the wild pomegranate.

### Type

*Balaustion pulcherrimum* Hook.

### Description

Shrubs prostrate or to 1.2 (–1.7) m high, glabrous; young stems leafy, with a loose pale grey epidermis and subepidermal tissue that, in most species, disintegrates into fine fibres when shed. Leaves opposite, decussate (rarely in whorls of 3 on a few branchlets), small, with a short petiole. Peduncles 1-flowered, borne at up to 6 consecutive nodes of each flowering branchlet but often with only 1 or 2 flowers per branchlet. Bracteoles broad, with margins incurved. Pedicels absent to long. Flowers actinomorphic. Hypanthium very shallow to campanulate or cylindrical. Sepals 5, shorter than petals, in many taxa with a pale margin, persistent in fruit. Petals 5, broadly obovate to transversely broadly elliptic, 2.5–9 mm long, white to brightly coloured, shed in fruit; antipetalous colletes absent or minute. Staminodes rare or absent. Stamens 13–35, geniculate (but appearing erect in *B. pulcherrimum*), fairly uniformly distributed in a circle, in most species contiguous or with small gaps at the base, erect to incurved, much shorter than to exceeding the petals. Filaments broad

at the base (except in *B. hemisphaericum* and *B. interruptum*). Anthers introrse; connective gland fused over its full length, distinctly protruding below the thecae (except in *B. pulcherrimum*). Ovary c. ½ to fully inferior, 3-locular; summit raised at centre of flower; placentas axile, large or very large, sessile; ovules 4–22 per loculus, radially arranged. Style exserted; base deeply inset in a cylindrical depression. Fruits almost fully inferior to ⅔ superior, 3-valvate, few- or many-seeded; placentas ovate to broadly elliptic. Seeds slightly to distinctly faceted, somewhat reniform, 1.2–2.6 mm long, the inner surface with a broad, concave, whitish cavity (0.3–) 0.5–1 mm long; testa crustaceous, colliculate.

## Diagnostic Features

Distinguished from other genera in subtribe Hysterobaeckinae by having a large cavity on the inner surface of its seeds. Other important characters: shrubs small, usually low-growing; sepals not horned; stamens 13–35, ± equidistant in a single circle; placentas sessile, large or very large, with 4–22 ovules.

## Chromosome Numbers

$n = 11$  recorded in one species (*B. exsertum* Rye: Rye 2022).

## Biostatus

Native.



## Distribution

A genus with 18 species currently recognised, endemic to the southwest of Western Australia, extending from Canna and Kirkalocka Station southeast to Hyden and inland to Credo Station.



## Ecology

Mostly comprises very low-growing shrubs, with one species, *B. pulcherrimum*, producing adventitious roots. That species has large, brightly coloured, bird-pollinated flowers with copious nectar. For most other species pollination is likely to be by bees and other insects. The significance of the large cavity on the inside of the seeds is not known but the similarity in overall appearance of *Balaustion* seeds to those dispersed by ants in genera such as *Hypocalymma* and *Rinzia* suggests that myrmecochory is important.

## Nomenclature and Typification

*Balaustion* Hook., *Icones Plantarum; or Figures, with Brief Descriptive Characters and Remarks of New or Rare Plants*. London 9, t. 852 (1851). Type: *Balaustion pulcherrimum* Hook.

*Punicella* Turcz., *Bulletin de la Classe Physico-Mathématique de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg* 10: 333 (1852). Type: *Punicella carinata* Turcz. = *Balaustion pulcherrimum* Hook.

*Cheyenia* J.Drumm. ex Harv., *Hooker's Journal of Botany and Kew Garden Miscellany* 7: 56 (1855). Type: *Cheyenia pulchella* J.Drumm. ex Harv. = *Balaustion pulcherrimum* Hook.

## Taxonomic Notes

Of the named genera, the eastern Australian genus *Harmogia* Schauer appears from molecular data to be closest to *Balaustion* (Rye *et al.* 2020).

## Illustrations

W.J. Hooker, *Icones Plantarum; or Figures, with Brief Descriptive Characters and Remarks of New or Rare Plants*. London 9, t. 852 (1851), <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/16044741> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/16044741>); B.L. Rye, *Nuytsia* 19(1): 133, fig. 1 (2008), <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/62005813> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/62005813>); B.L. Rye, *Nuytsia* 33: 154, fig. 1; 164, fig. 2; 174, fig. 7 (2022).

## Excluded or Uncertain Names

*Balaustion* sp. Billyacatting Hill (A.S. George 14349), *B.* sp. North Ironcap (R.J. Cranfield 10580) and *B.* sp. Yorkrakine (C.A. Gardner s.n. 09/1933) remain informally recognised in Western Australia (Western Australian Herbarium 1998–; Rye 2022). Additional research is required to resolve their taxonomic status.

## Bibliography

Bentham, G. (1867). Myrtaceae, in *Flora Australiensis: a description of the plants of the Australian Territory* 3: 1–289. (Reeve and Co.: London). <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/11160188> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/11160188>)

Blackall, W.E. & Grieve, B.J. (1980). *How to know Western Australian wildflowers Part 3A*. Restructured and revised second edition by B.J. Grieve. (University of Western Australia Press: Nedlands, Western Australia). <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60448011> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60448011>)

Gardner, C.A. (1928). Contributiones florae Australiae occidentalis VI. *Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia* 13: 61–68, plates 24–27. <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/43760940> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/43760940>)

Harvey, W.H. (1855). Characters of some new genera of plants recently discovered by Mr James Drummond in Western Australia. *Hooker's Kew Journal of Botany and Kew Garden Miscellany* 7: 51–58. <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/767289> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/767289>)

Hooker, W.J. (1851). *Balaustion pulcherrimum*. *Icones plantarum or figures, with brief descriptive characters and remarks, of new or rare plants, selected from the author's herbarium* 9: t. 852. <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/16044741> (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/16044741>)

Keighery, G.J. (1982). Bird-pollinated Plants in Western Australia, in Armstrong, J.A., Powell, J.M. & Richards, A.J. (eds), *Pollination and Evolution*, pp. 77–89. (Royal Botanic Gardens: Sydney).

Lam, N., Wilson, P.G., Heslewood, M.M. & Quinn, C.J. (2002). A phylogenetic analysis of the *Chamelaucium* alliance (Myrtaceae). *Australian Systematic Botany* 15(4): 535–543.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/SB01039> (<https://doi.org/10.1071/SB01039>)

Niendenzu, F. (1893). Myrtaceae, in Engler, A. & Prantl, K. (eds), *Die natürlichen pflanzenfamilien* 3: 57–105. (Engelmann: Leipzig). [bibdigital.rjb.csic.es/idviewer/10948/65](https://bibdigital.rjb.csic.es/idviewer/10948/65)

(<https://dpaw.sharepoint.com/teams/PlantScienceandHerbarium/Shared%20Documents/Research/SP2013-052%20Taxonomy%20Myrtaceae/bibdigital.rjb.csic.es/idviewer/10948/65>)

Pike, K.M. (1956). Pollen morphology of Myrtaceae from the south-west Pacific area. *Australian Journal of Botany* 4(1): 13–53.

Rye, B.L. (1979). Chromosome number variation in the Myrtaceae and its taxonomic implications.

*Australian Journal of Botany* 27(5): 547–573. <https://doi.org/10.1071/BT9790547>

(<https://doi.org/10.1071/BT9790547>)

Rye, B.L. (2009). A reduced circumscription of *Balaustion* and description of the new genus *Cheyनिया* (Myrtaceae: Chamelaucieae). *Nuytsia* 19(1): 129–148.

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/62005809>

(<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/62005809>)

Rye, B.L. (2009). An interim key to the Western Australian tribes and genera of Myrtaceae. *Nuytsia*

19(2): 313–323. <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/62002065>

(<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/62002065>)

Rye, B.L., Wilson, P.G., Heslewood, M.M., Perkins, A.J. & Thiele, K.R. (2020). A new subtribal

classification of Myrtaceae tribe Chamelaucieae. *Australian Systematic Botany* 33(2): 191–206.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/SB19009> (<https://doi.org/10.1071/SB19009>)

Rye, B.L. (2022). An expanded circumscription and revision of the Western Australian genus *Balaustion* (Myrtaceae: Chamelaucieae: Hysterobaeckeiinae). *Nuytsia* 33: 149–204.

<https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/science/nuytsia/1030.pdf>

(<https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/science/nuytsia/1030.pdf>)

Western Australian Herbarium (1998–). *FloraBase—the Western Australian Flora*. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. <https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>






(<https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>) [accessed 7 December 2022].

Wilson, P.G., Heslewood, M., Lam, N. & Quinn, C. (2004). Progress towards a phylogeny of the *Chamelaucium* alliance (Myrtaceae). *Australian Biologist* 17: 28–33.

## Source

Published 4 January 2023.

## Taxonomy

- Kingdom: Plantae  ()
- Phylum: Charophyta
- Class: Equisetopsida
- Subclass: Magnoliidae
- Superorder: Rosanae  ()
- Order: Myrtales  ()
- Family: Myrtaceae (/opus/foa/profile/Myrtaceae)  ()
- Genus: Balaustion (/opus/foa/profile/Balaustion)  ()



()

[View all images \(\)](#)

© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia, 2023

Last updated: Juliet Wege; Nov 3, 2022 9:24 Status:

[opus/foa/about##copyright](#)

Partial

Author - B.L. Rye



Editor - J.A. Wege

[Contributor](#) - C.J. Ely provided technical support. P.G. Kodela provided editorial assistance.

Top

Cite this profile as: B.L. Rye. Balaustion, in J.A. Wege (ed.), Flora of Australia. Australian Biological Resources Study, Department of Climate Change, the Environment and Water: Canberra.

<https://profiles.ala.org.au/opus/foa/profile/Balaustion> [Date Accessed: 27 February 2023]

---

(<http://www.environment.gov.au>) (<http://www.environment.gov.au/science/abrs>) (<https://www.ala.org.au>)



Top



# CHAH

Council of Heads of  
Australasian Herbaria



[ala.org.au](http://ala.org.au)

**Flora of Australia**

✉ [abrs@awe.gov.au](mailto:abrs@awe.gov.au) (mailto:abrs@awe.gov.au)

ISSN 2207-7820

All material CC-BY  
unless otherwise stated.

Other collections (/)



Top