Babingtonia Lindl.

Options

ALA (https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://id.biodiversity.org.au/taxon/apni/51781683) NSL [legitimate] (https://biodiversity.org.au/nsl/services/apni-format/display/103089)

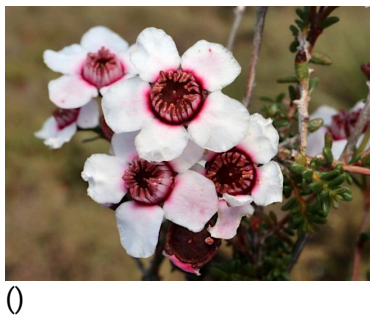
— Lindley, J. in Lindley, J. (ed.) (1842), *Edwards's Botanical Register* 28: t. 10

Nomenclature

Lindley, J. in Lindley, J. (ed.) (1842), *Edwards's Botanical Register* 28: t. 10 ()

Etymology

Dedicated to Charles Cardale Babington (1808–1895), a professor of botany at the University of Cambridge.



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Top

Description

Low-growing to erect shrubs, mostly less than 1.5 m high, glabrous, single-stemmed or multi-branched at base, rarely multi-stemmed from a lignotuber. Young stems sometimes tuberculate. Leaves opposite, decussate, sometimes densely clustered, shortly petiolate; blade concolorous, small; apical point absent or short. Peduncles solitary in the axils, 1–7 (–16)-flowered. Pedicels ranging from much shorter to longer than peduncles. Flowers actinomorphic or (in taxa with indehiscent fruits) with the gynoecium eccentric. Hypanthium adnate to ovary for most of length, broad. Sepals much shorter than the petals, dorsally ridged and with a petaloid border, persistent in fruit. Petals 5, widely spreading in flower, shed in fruit, 1.3–6.5 mm long, white or pink. Staminodes absent. Stamens inflexed in bud, 3–30, in a circle or antisepalous, variable in number per flower except when reduced to 3, much shorter than the petals, geniculate such that the anther faces inwards at about a right angle to the filament. Filaments flattened. Anthers helmet-like or 2-lobed, dehiscent by 2 terminal pores, with fused thecae; connective gland fused, large but not or only shortly protruding below base of thecae, becoming hollowed where it protrudes. Ovary inferior, 1–3-locular; ovules radial, 4–16 per loculus. Style with base inset onto a long cylindrical depression or (if fruit indehiscent) a shorter tilted depression; stigma small. Fruits c. ½ to fully inferior, broad, either 2- or 3-valvate or thin-walled and indehiscent, multi-seeded. Seeds usually 0.9–1.4 mm long, strongly facetted (except when fruit indehiscent), often with slightly raised margins between the facets; testa crustaceous (only thinly so when fruit indehiscent), smooth to deeply colliculate or somewhat rugose; hilum small.

Diagnostic Features

The following diagnostic characters are found in a majority or significant number of species: stamens 3–30, with a flattened filament; anthers helmet-like with no or little protrusion of the connective gland at the base; ovules 4–16 ovules per loculus; seeds strongly facetted (except when fruit indehiscent), the junctions of the facets slightly raised.

Chromosome Numbers

Presumed to be constant on *x* = 11 but only one species has been sampled (Rye 1979).

Biostatus

Native.

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Distribution

A southwestern genus of 13 named species, extending from north of the Hutt River south to Dunsborough and southeast to the Mount Barker area, Western Australia.

Ecology

Flowers attract varied insects and range from having readily accessible nectar to having restricted access through a small gap between the stamens and style. In most species strongly facetted seeds are released from the summit of a valvate capsule, but two species have an indehiscent, 1-locular fruit with an unfacetted seed.

Nomenclature and Typification

Babingtonia Lindl. in J. Lindley (ed.), *Edwards's Botanical Register* 28: t. 10 (1842); *Baeckea* sect. *Babingtonia* (Lindl.) Benth. & Hook.f., *Genera Plantarum* 1(2): 702 (1865). Type: *Babingtonia camphorosmae* (Endl.) Lindl.

Taxonomic Notes

Babingtonia is the earliest-named genus belonging to the large subtribe Hysterobaeckeinae. Its circumscription currently excludes *Baeckea* sp. Walkaway (A.S. George 11249) (Western Australian Herbarium 1998–), a possible close relative that differs in having the connective gland markedly protruding. Although the connective gland does not protrude greatly in *Babingtonia*, it can often be seen as a large area of yellowish colouring on the dorsal surface of the helmet-like anther.

Illustrations

B.L. Rye, *Nuytsia* 25: 224, fig. 2, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60020949 (https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60020949); 225, fig. 3, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60020960 (https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60020960); 235, fig. 5, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60020960 (https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60020960) (2015); B.L. Rye, *Nuytsia* 31: 31, fig. 1 (2020), https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60600192 (https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/60600192); B.L. Rye, *Nuytsia* 37: 52, fig. 1D, E (2026).

Excluded or Uncertain Names

Babingtonia sp. Dandaragan (G. Paczkowska s.n. PERTH 08245606) is too poorly known for its taxonomic status to be assessed (Rye 2026).

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Top

SEND FEEDBACK

https://doi.org/10.1071/SB24014

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Top

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Taxonomy

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

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