

Plants of South Eastern New South Wales



Flower and leaves. Australian Plant Image Index, photographer Murray Fagg, Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra, ACT.



Flowering branch. Photographer Don Wood, Xi Road, SE Forests National Park



Flowering stem (subsp. *integrifolia*). Photographer Peter Woodard, near Walcha

Common name

Black sassafras, Southern sassafras

Family

Atherospermataceae

Where found

Mainly rainforest.

subsp. *integrifolium*: Mainly Blue Mountains. Occasionally Monga National Park east of Braidwood.

subsp. *moschatum*: Western edge of the ranges south from Brown Mtn west of Bega. Occasionally Kosciuszko National Park.

Notes

Tree or **shrub** to about 30 m high. Bark smooth, fissured longitudinally, horizontally wrinkled. Branchlets furrowed, often flattened at the **nodes**, usually densely brown hairy with T-shaped hairs (needs a hand lens or a macro app on your phone/tablet to see). Leaves strongly nutmeg-scented when rubbed. Leaves opposite each other, 2–10 cm long, 8–25 mm wide, margins **entire** or coarsely and irregularly toothed, upper surface almost hairless, lower surface densely grey- to white-hairy. Male and female flowers on the same plant, with male flowers above the female on each branchlet. Flowers fragrant. Flowers white or greenish, usually with purplish markings, with 4–8 '**petals**' in 2 **whorls**, each 'petal' 6–10 mm long. 2 sepal-like **bracts** cupping the flowers in bud. Flowers single. Flowers Winter to Spring.

Family was Monimiaceae.

subsp. *integrifolium*: Shrub or tree to 10 m high. Margins of **adult** leaves usually entire, occasionally with small teeth. Juvenile leaves sometimes sparsely and irregularly toothed.

subsp. *moschatum*: Tree to about 30 m high, often multistemmed. Margins of adult and **juvenile** leaves usually toothed, rarely completely entire or only with an occasional tooth.

PlantNET description of species and key to subspecies: <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Atherosperma-moschatum> (accessed 4 January, 2021)

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