

Plants of South Eastern New South Wales



Flower buds and flower. Photographer Malcolm Storey, England



Flowering stem. Photographer Don Wood, Tallaganda State Forest south of Braidwood



Plants. Photographer JC Schou, Denmark



Line drawings. e. portion of stem showing sheath and leaf base; f. flowering stem. EMMayfield, E.M., National Herbarium of Victoria, © 2021 Royal Botanic Gardens Board

Common name

Water pepper

Family

Polygonaceae

Where found

Disturbed sites, damp open places, along streams, swampy ground, and in shallow running water. Widespread.

Notes

Annual herb to 1.2 m high. Stems more or less hairless, often **gland**-dotted. Leaves **alternating** up the stems, 3–15 cm long, 8–30 mm wide, somewhat sticky, hairy on the **veins** and margins; **stipular sheath** (ocrea) with the upper margin mostly with fringing hairs 3–5 mm long. Leaves taste pungent and bitter. Flowers pale green to white, tinged pink, or reddish, with 4 or 5 '**petals**' each 2–3.8 mm long, free from each other for about two-thirds their length. '**Petals**' with conspicuous oil **glands**. **Spikes** slender, often interrupted and hanging down, 3–18 cm long, each flower cluster distinct, with only 1 mature flower per cluster at a time. Flowers summer-autumn.

Treated as **introduced** in the ACT.

PlantNET description: <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Persicaria-hydropiper> (accessed 30 January, 2021)

Author: Betty Wood.

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