

Mesosphaerum pectinatum (L.) Kuntze

Family:

Lamiaceae

Kuntze, C.E.O. (1891) *Revisio Generum Plantarum* 2: 525.

Common name:

Comb hyptis; Hyptis, Comb

Stem

Usually flowers and fruits as an erect herb but may reach 4 m.

Leaves

Leaf bearing twigs +/- 4-angled, twigs and leaves aromatic or not aromatic when crushed. Leaf blades about 2-8 x 1-4.5 cm. Hairy on both leaf surfaces, usually denser on underside.

Flowers

Inflorescence a 6-15-flowered cyme. Calyx about 2.5 mm long, 10-ribbed, lobes linear, all parts of the outer surface of the calyx clothed in hairs. Corolla white to pale blue or pink-tinged, 3-3.5 mm long.

Fruit

Fruit resembles a capsule but actually consists of a persistent ribbed calyx about 8-10 mm long and contains 1-4 nutlets. Nutlets oblong, to 2 mm long. Nutlet surface smooth when dry.

Seedlings

Cotyledons about 3-5 x 4-6 mm, reniform. First pair of leaves opposite, margins crenate with about 3-5 teeth, upper and lower surfaces of the leaf blade hairy. At the tenth leaf stage: crushed plant parts emit an odour like that of mint (*Mentha* sp.) leaf margin irregularly serrate. Leaf petiolate. Stem square in transverse section.

Distribution and Ecology

An introduced species originally from tropical America, which has become naturalised in NEQ and CEQ. Altitudinal range near sea level. Usually grows along roadsides, under powerlines and other disturbed areas.

Natural History & Notes

A serious tropical weed.

Synonyms

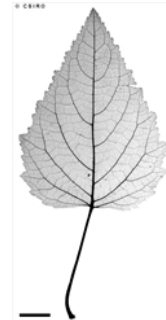
***Hyptis pectinata* (L.) Poit.**, *Ann. Mus. Par.*, vii: 474 (1806). ***Nepeta pectinata* L.**, *Systema Naturae* Edn. 10, 2: 1097 (1759), Type: Browne s.n., Jamaica.

RFK Code

3570



Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



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