

NZ Myrtaceae Key - Online edition

Callistemon linearis (Schrad. & J.C.Wendl.) Colvill ex Sweet

Synonyms

Callistemon rigidus R.Br., *Melaleuca linearis* Schrad. & J.C.Wendl.

Common Names

narrow-leaved bottlebrush, stiff bottlebrush, upright bottlebrush

Origin

Australia: south-eastern coastal regions.

Cultivation

In New Zealand almost exclusively found in cultivation; only a few records of it self-establishing.

Distribution

Scattered records from mainly urban areas in the North Island of New Zealand.

Distinguishing Features

- Leaves linear, <3 mm wide, but sometimes broader.
- Leaf lateral veins obscure.
- Flowers at first in terminal spikes, but spike axes soon growing out into leafy shoots.
- Stamens free.
- Filaments pink to red.

Habit

Sparsely branched shrubs to 3 m tall.

Bark and Stem/Trunk

Bark grey, hard, fibrous. Branchlets with hairs.

Leaves

Adult leaves alternate, linear, 40–100(–130) mm long, 1–4(–6) mm wide; leaf blade flat, hairy when young, soon becoming hairless, leaf surfaces not puckered; margins entire and thick; tips pointed, sometimes prolonged and stiff; leaf bases becoming gradually narrower; leaf stalks absent or to 1 mm.

Flowers

Flowers produced in cylindrical spikes 50–100 mm long, mostly 45–50 mm or occasionally to 60 mm diam., flowers \pm 5–7 mm in diam., stalks absent, petals 5, yellow-green to cream; sepals 5, tips free, hairy; stamens red, longer than petals, filaments 20–25 mm long, anthers dark red. Main flowering period: late spring to early summer.

Fruit

Fruit dry, 3–4-locular, each fruit \pm 5–7 mm wide.

Similar Species

Here separated from *Callistemon citrinus*, *C. salignus* and *C. viminalis* by possessing leaves <3 mm wide as opposed to >3 mm wide.

Notes

Callistemon linearis is listed as a DOC Environmental Weed in New Zealand.

The traditional taxonomic view has *C. linearis* possessing leaves <3 mm wide. However, inclusion of *C. rigidus* in the former, as the Australian Plant Census (APC) currently does, means that leaves can be wider.

Callistemon is a genus of about 50 species endemic to Australia. Some consider *Callistemon* to be better placed in *Melaleuca*. We follow the Australian Plant Census (APC) by recognising them as separate genera.

External Links

- Flora of New Zealand Online (*Melaleuca linearis*; species profile)
- Flora of New Zealand Online (*Melaleuca linearis*; weed profile)
- GBIF
- iNaturalist NZ (*Melaleuca linearis*)
- PlantNET: New South Wales Flora Online

- Plants of South Eastern New South Wales
- VicFlora: Flora of Victoria

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