

Homoranthus coracinus (Myrtaceae), a new species from Queensland

A.R. Bean

Summary

Bean, A.R. (2000). *Homoranthus coracinus* (Myrtaceae), a new species from Queensland. *Austrobaileya* 5(4): 687–689. A new and rare species of *Homoranthus* with black petals is described and illustrated, and compared to related species.

Key words: *Homoranthus*, *Homoranthus coracinus*, taxonomy, Queensland flora, Myrtaceae

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Introduction

Byrnes (1981) named a number of new taxa in *Darwinia* Rudge and *Homoranthus* A.Cunn. ex Schauer, distinguishing *Homoranthus* mainly by the presence of lacinate sepals. The circumscription of *Homoranthus* was changed by Craven and Jones (1991), who placed an emphasis on placentation and ovule number. The species described here conforms to their concept of *Homoranthus*. Because of the lacinate sepals, it also fits into *Homoranthus* sensu Byrnes.

The genus contains a high proportion of rare species of restricted distribution, on acidic substrates with little or no soil development. Two such species were described by Hunter (1998) from New South Wales.

***Homoranthus coracinus* A.R.Bean sp. nov.**
affinis *H. darwinoidi* autem conflorescentia 3–6 flora, foliis applanatis, petalis atris, stylo infra stigma pilis tantum aliquot praedito differt. **Typus:** Queensland. LEICHHARDT DISTRICT: Mt Mooloolong, Ka Ka Mundi National Park, via Springsure, 7 May 1999, A.R. Bean 14843 (holo: BRI (1 sheet + spirit); iso: CANB, MEL, NSW, distribuendi).

Prostrate to semi-prostrate shrub, to 0.3 m high and to 1.2 m diameter. Bark grey, fibrous, slightly furrowed. Leaves narrowly-obovate to

obovate (as seen when viewed perpendicular to branchlet axis), 3.0–5.5 mm long, c. 0.4 mm wide, and 1.0–1.6 mm thick, mucronate, green or grey-green, margins entire; oil glands scattered, rather obscure. Petioles c. 0.5 mm long. Conflorescence terminal, anauxotelic, 3–6-flowered. Bracteoles cymbiform, 6–7 mm long, 2.4–2.7 mm wide, gland-dotted, apex obtuse, persistent at least until anthesis, enclosing hypanthia; pedicels (anthopodia) absent; peduncles thick, 2–3 mm long. Hypanthium cylindrical, 5.3–6 mm long, 2.8–3.3 mm diameter; punctulate, yellow, with 4 indistinct longitudinal ribs basally; smooth, pink to red and unribbed distally. Sepals 5, lacinate, 3.2–4.3 mm long, 1.2–1.5 mm wide, erect, white, with 2–5 acute linear lobes, each 1.0–1.9 mm long. Petals broadly obovate, 2.7–3.0 × 2.2–2.7 mm, black, margin entire. Stamens 10, alternating with staminodes. Staminodes scarcely adnate to the adjacent stamen. Filaments c. 0.8 mm long, terete, tapering. Anthers globose, white, basifixed, dehiscing by small pores. Style 13–16 mm long, glabrous except for a few spreading hairs below the stigmatic area; stigma unexpanded, papillose. Ovules 7–8, collateral in two vertical rows. Fruit indehiscent, not enlarging after anthesis. Fig. 1.

Additional specimen examined: Queensland. LEICHHARDT DISTRICT: Ka Ka Mundi section of Carnarvon N.P., Apr. 1999, Neill, Bouchard & Neill s.n. (BRI).

Distribution and habitat: Known only from the north-western slopes of Mt Mooloolong

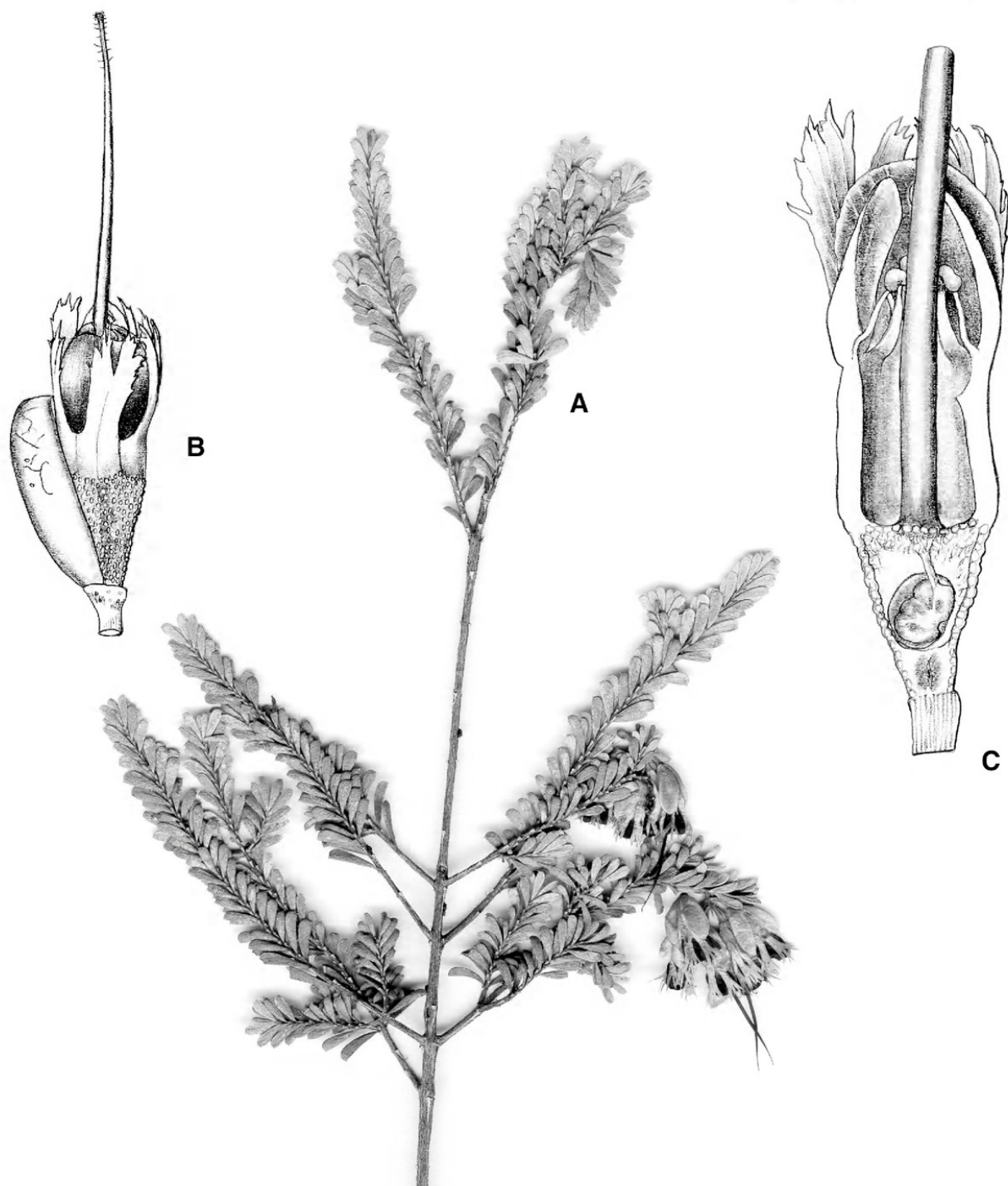


Fig. 1. *Homoranthus coracinus*. **A.** flowering branch×1. **B.** exterior view of flower at anthesis with one bracteole removed×4. **C.** longitudinal section of flower×8. all from *Bean* 14843.

in Ka Ka Mundi National Park, SW of Springsure. It grows on a sloping shelf of quartzose sandstone with skeletal soil, supporting only scattered shrubs and stunted trees. The associated species include *Eucalyptus trachyphloia* F.Muell., *Leptospermum lamellatum* Joy Thomps.,

Leucopogon flexifolius R.Br. and *Homoranthus zeteticorum* Craven & S.R.Jones.

Phenology: Flowers have been recorded in April and May.

Affinities: *H. coracinus* differs from all other *Homoranthus* spp. (and perhaps from all other

Myrtaceae) by its petals, which are quite black in both fresh and dried material. It is most closely related to *H. darwinoides* and *H. porteri*, both of which also have large persistent bracteoles and laciniate sepals. *H. coracinus* differs from *H. darwinoides* by its 3–6-flowered corymbose inflorescence, flattened leaves, black petals and style with only a few hairs below the stigma. *H. coracinus* differs from *H. porteri* by the much shorter leaves, the fewer sepal lacinae, the black petals and the longer hypanthia.

Conservation status: Less than 100 plants are known from the type locality. It is possible that more populations will be found, but its habitat (extensive treeless areas on sandstone slopes) is not common. Applying the guidelines of the IUCN (Anon. 1994), a status of ‘endangered’ is recommended (Criterion D).

Etymology: From the Latin ‘*coracinus*’ meaning raven-black, in reference to the petals.

To accommodate *H. coracinus*, the key given in Craven & Jones (1991) should be adjusted as follows:

4. Leaves 3–5.5 mm long
 Inflorescence 3–6-flowered; petals black; sepals with 2–5 lacinae..... **H. coracinus**
 Inflorescence 2-flowered; petals white; sepals with 6–10 lacinae..... **H. darwinoides**
4. Leaves 4.5–17 mm long (if less than 6 mm long then sepals with fewer than 5 lacinae)

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