

THYMELAEACEAE

Annual herbs to trees. Stipules absent or vestigial. Leaves simple, entire. Inflorescences various, often in dense involucre heads. Flowers mostly actinomorphic, usually with well-developed hypanthium. Sepals petaloid, (3)4-5(6). Petals present or in NT species absent. Stamens usually 2-10, free or adnate to hypanthium, often in 2 whorls. Ovary superior, 1-12-locular; ovules 1 per locule, pendulous; style simple. Fruit indehiscent or rarely capsular.

A world wide family of 55-60 genera and over 500 species in Africa, SE Asia to Australia. In Australia 9 genera; 5 genera in the NT, 2 occur in the DR. [Rye & Heads, 1990]

- 1. Shrubs in rainforest; flowers white Phaleria
- 1. Herbs in open forest; flowers red Thecanthes

PHALERIA Jack

A genus of 25-30 species, from Sri Lanka to Polynesia and northern Australia. Three species in Australia, 2 occur in the NT and 1 in the DR.

***P. octandra* (L.) Baillon**

Shrub to 3 m high. Stems glabrous. Leaves opposite, glabrous; petioles 5-8 mm long; blades elliptic, 75-230 mm long, 40-90 mm wide, L/W 2-3.1, acuminate. Inflorescences of 8-25-flowered, mostly terminal clusters; involucre bracts 4, elliptic, c. 7 mm long; peduncle 2.5-7 mm long, with

rows of small imbricate bracts. Flowers \pm sessile on swollen receptacle, white, minutely tomentose. Hypanthium 10-17 mm long. Sepals 4-5, \pm elliptic, 4-7 mm long. Stamens 8, exserted, adnate to hypanthium but free in upper part of hypanthium. Ovary 2-locular. Fruit succulent, red, broadly pyriform, 1-2-seeded. Flowering and fruiting: Nov - Mar. Fig. 42

Phaleria

Thecanthes

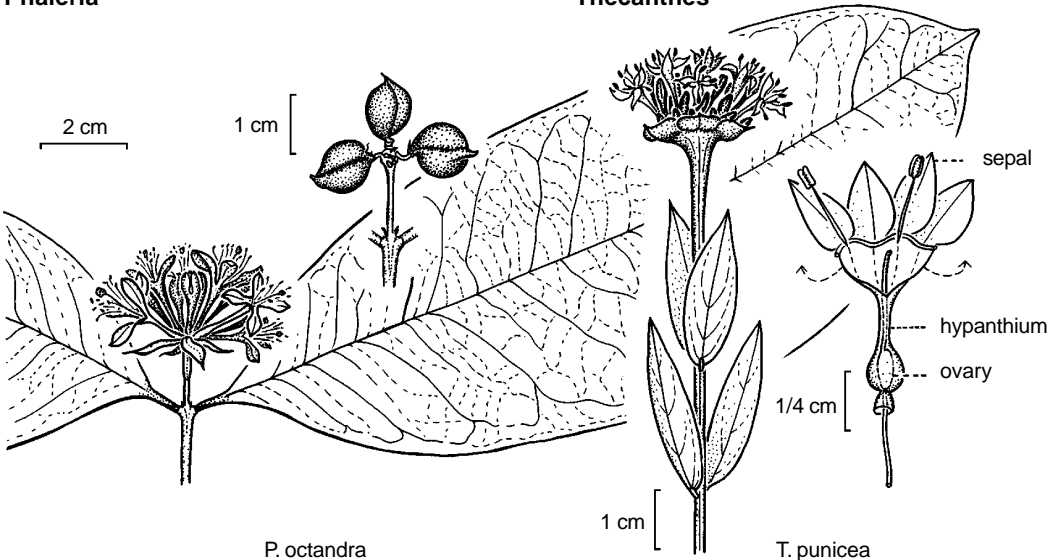


Fig. 42

