

Heterocentron subtriplinervium

Pearl flower

Heterocentron subtriplinervium (Link & Otto)

A. Braun & C. Bouche

Syn. *Melastoma subtriplinervium*

Family: Melastomataceae

Description: Small, erect, semi-woody shrub with 4-angled stems to 6 ft long. Leaves opposite, narrow to ovate, to 3 inches long by 1.5 inches wide, 3-nerved, wings along petioles of larger leaves. Flowers to 3 inches wide, petals 0.33 inches long, color variable: white, pink, or magenta. Fruits cup-shaped with many small seeds. Greek *heteros*, variable, referring to flower colors; *kentron*, spur (on anthers); *subtriplinervium*, somewhat 3-nerved, referring to prominent leaf veins⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Distribution: Native to Mexico and Guatemala. An ornamental in Hawai'i, naturalized in mesic to humid sites at Kōke'e, Kaua'i; O'ahu; Maui; and Volcano, Hawai'i. First collected in 1927 on Maui⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Environmental impact: Prolific seeder, typical of melastomes. Birds spread seeds.



Management: Other melastomes are sensitive to hormone-type herbicides.