**Alyxia ruscifolia** R.Br.

**Family:**
Apocynaceae


**Common name:**
Native Holly; Moonya; Holly, Native; Chain Fruit; Prickly Alyxia

**Stem**
Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub about 2-3 m tall.

**Leaves**
Twigs and petioles produce a milky exudate. Leaves in whorls of four or five. Leaf blades variable in size, up to 6.5 x 2.5 cm, petioles about 0.1-0.5 cm long. Lateral veins about 10-20 on each side of the midrib, difficult to observe on the underside of the leaf blade but +/- raised on the upper surface, at least on dried leaves. Margin of the leaf blades +/- thickened and roughened or very finely toothed, not obvious to the eye but can be felt with the tips of the fingers. Leaf apex subulate.

**Flowers**
Flowers strongly perfumed, about 3-6 mm diam. Sepals about 1.7-2.8 mm long, margins ciliate. Corolla tube about 5-6.5 mm long, lobes obovate, about 2-4 mm long. Corolla tube glabrous on the outer surface, hairy on the inner surface. Anthers about 0.6-1.1 x 0.3-0.4 mm, orange but darker on the back with a few hairs near the base. Ovary hairy. Stigma hairy, orange.

**Fruit**
Fruits sometimes moniliform, each ellipsoid segment or 'bead' about 6.5-7 x 6 mm. Style remnants persistent at the apex. Seed longitudinally ribbed or lined and sculptured between the ribs or lines. Embryo long and narrow, cotyledons longer than the radicle.

**Seedlings**
First pair of leaves forming part of a whorl of six leaves. Margins denticulate, apices spiny, midrib depressed on the upper surface. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves in whorls of six. Leaf blades lanceolate, margins denticulate with 10-20 projections on each side, apices spiny. Numerous short glandular(?) tubercles visible on the upper surface of each leaf blade. Petioles hairy. Seed germination time 114 to 517 days.

**Distribution and Ecology**
Occurs in NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as coastal central New South Wales. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 900 m. Grows as an understory shrub in or on the margins of rain forest (particularly the drier rain forests), monsoon forest and wet sclerophyll forest. Also occurs on Lord Howe Island.

**Synonyms**

**RFK Code**
3016