

Alyxia spicata R.Br.

Family:

Apocynaceae

Brown, R. (1810) *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae* : 470. Type: N. T., Vanderlin Is., R. Brown (2857); lecto: BM; iso: K. Fide Forster (1992), *Austral. Syst. Bot.* 5: 569.

Common name:

Chain Fruit

Stem

Can grow into a vine but usually flowers and fruits as a shrub particularly in exposed situations. Vine stem diameters to 3 cm recorded. Lenticels often arranged in horizontal lines. Exudate not very copious. Outer blaze quite hard and granular.

Leaves

Twigs and petioles produce a milky exudate. Twigs marked by light brown elongated lenticels. Leaves usually in whorls of three or four. Generally four per whorl on orthotropic shoots and three per whorl on plagiotropic shoots. Leaf blades variable in size, about 6.5-8 x 2-3 cm, venation difficult to discern. Petioles about 0.6-1 cm long.

Flowers

Flowers about 3-4 mm diam. Calyx hairy, lobes about 0.9-2 mm long. Corolla tube usually orange, about 2.5-3 mm long, glabrous on the outer surface, but pubescent below the stamens on the inner surface, lobes usually cream, about 1.5-2 mm long. Stamens inserted in the corolla tube. Anthers narrowly cordate, about 0.5-0.7 x 0.2 mm, tapering to a fine point at the apex. Ovary very hairy.

Fruit

Fruits black when ripe but yellow or orange before maturity. Fruits often moniliform, each 'bead' about 10-12 x 10 mm. Peduncle about 2-2.5 mm diam. Testa longitudinally striped. Cotyledons much longer than the radicle. Endosperm orange, deeply ruminant.

Seedlings

Hypocotyl hairy. First pair of leaves stipulate, lanceolate, about 37 x 9 mm with more than 20 veins on each side of the midrib. At the tenth leaf stage: most seedling parts produce a milky exudate when cut or broken. Stipules small and inconspicuous, about 1 mm long. Lateral veins numerous, about 40 on each side of the midrib. Midrib raised on the upper surface of the leaf blade. Leaves arranged in whorls of three from about the 7th to the 10th leaf. Stem clothed in short erect hairs. Seed germination time 70 to 89 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in WA, NT, CYP, NEQ and CEQ. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 1000 m. Grows in rain forest, monsoon forest, beach forest and vine thickets. Also occurs in New Guinea.

Synonyms

Gynopogon spicatum (R.Br.) Britten, *Illustrations of the Botany of Captain Cook's Voyage Round the World 2* : 60(1901). **Pulassarium spicatum (R.Br.) Kuntze**, *Revisio Generum Plantarum 2*: 417(1891). **Pulassarium thyrsoflorum (Benth.) Kuntze**, *Revisio Generum Plantarum 2*: 417(1891). **Alyxia tetragona R.Br.**, *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae* : 470(1810), Type: Queensland, Endeavour R., 17 June - 4 Aug. 1770, Banks & Solander; lecto: BM; iso: BM. Fide Forster (1992) *Aust. Syst. Bot.* 5: 570. **Alyxia thyrsoflora Benth.**, *Flora Australiensis* 4: 309(1868), Type: Queensland, Port Denison, J.Dallachy, E. Fitzalan; lecto: K. Fide Forster (1992), *Aust. Syst. Bot.* 5: 570.

RFK Code

3017



Flowers. © R.L. Barrett



Inflorescence. © R.L. Barrett



Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



Fruit. © R.L. Barrett



Leaves and fruit. © CSIRO



Leaves and flowers. © R.L. Barrett



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, durian germination. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Vine stem bark and vine stem transverse section. © CSIRO



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