Aristolochia acuminata Lam.

**Family:**
*Aristolochiaceae*


**Common name:**
Birthwort, Indian; Native Dutchman’s Pipe; Indian Birthwort

**Stem**
Vine stem diameters to 3 cm recorded. Distinct rings of bark included in the wood. Blaze odour may resemble that of potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*).

**Leaves**
Leaf blades about 9-28 x 4.5-16.5 cm, petioles about 2-6 cm long, shallowly grooved in the upper surface, usually twisted towards the base. Leaves usually with 3-5 veins radiating from the base. Stems longitudinally ribbed from the decurrent petiole base. Leaf blades slightly aromatic or unpleasantly perfumed when crushed.

**Flowers**
Ovary (hypanthium) 6-ribbed, about 10-13 mm long. Perianth tube consisting of an inflated base (attaining a diameter of about 7-8 mm), constricted above the base to form a tube about 10 x 1.5 mm and then flared at the apex to a diameter of about 5-6 mm. Apical lobe about 20-30 x 7 mm. Stamens 6, fused together to form a structure about 3 x 4 mm. Stigmas 6. Ovary 6-locular. Ovules numerous in each locale.

**Fruit**
Capsules ellipsoid, about 3.5-4 x 2.5 cm before dehiscence. Following dehiscence the capsule resembles a parachute supported by strings about 5 cm long. Seeds numerous, stacked in columns. Each seed about 8-9 x 6-10 mm with a wing about 1-2 mm wide all around the margin. Embryo about 0.5-0.7 mm long.

**Seedlings**
Cotyledons broadly oblong-elliptic, ovate to almost orbicular, about 12-15 x 9-12 mm, petioles hairy, about 3-4 mm long. First leaves ovate, minutely hairy, margins entire, venation depressed on the upper surface. Third leaf cordate. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade cordate to narrowly cordate, apex acuminate. Midrib depressed on the upper surface. Crushed leaves emit a strong unpleasant odour. Seed germination time 43 to 162 days.

**Distribution and Ecology**
Occurs in WA, CYP, NEQ and CEQ. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 500 m. Grows in rain forest and monsoon forest. Also occurs in SE Asia, Malesia, New Guinea & Solomon Islands.

**Natural History & Notes**

**Synonyms**

**RFK Code**
2092
Fruit showing seeds. © R.L. Barrett

Green and dehiscing fruit and seed. © W. T. Cooper

Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO

10th leaf stage. © CSIRO
Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO

Vine stem bark and vine stem transverse section. © CSIRO