**Biophytum petersianum** Klotzsch

**Family:**
**Oxalidaceae**


**Stem**
Annual herb 1-40 cm. in height with a simple erect appressed-pilose or appressed-pubescent or tormentose stem with a simple rosette of leaves at the apex.

**Leaves**
Leaves up to 5 cm. long; leaflets in 3-10 pairs, the terminal pair usually 1½ times as long as the next pair and the rest decreasing gradually in size, up to 10 × 6-5 mm., the smallest ca. 3 mm. in diam., chartaceous, opaque, obliquely elliptic or oblong-elliptic to subcircular, margin sparsely ciliate with long thin hairs, otherwise glabrous, with up to 6 (8) pairs of rather thick prominent lateral nerves at right angles to the midrib; rachis hairy; petiolule ca. 0-5 mm. long, with a large gland at the base.

**Flowers**
Flowers yellow or orange, with pedicels up to 2 mm. long, in 2-5-flowered congested pseudumbels; peduncle up to 9 cm. long (sometimes very short), pubescent or pilose. Sepals up to 6 × 1-5 mm., lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, 3-7-nerved, sparsely puberulous, longer than the capsule. Petals 5-6 × 1 mm., lorate, ± coherent, obtuse. Stamens with 5 longer ones 2 mm. long, 5 shorter ones 1 mm. long.

**Fruit**
Capsule ca. 4 × 3-5 mm. obovoid-ellipsoid, sepals persistent in fruit. Seeds ca. 0-4 mm. long, flattened-ellipsoid, minutely dark tuberculate, brownish.

**Seedlings**
Features not available.

**Distribution and Ecology**
Occurs in CYP from the Torres Straight Islands southwards to the northern part of NEQ near Cape Flattery. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 420 m. Grows in rainforest, open Eucalypt forest, notophyll vineforest, Eucalypt woodland and wooded grassland. Also from Tropical Africa, Madagascar, SE Asia, Malesia and New Guinea.

**Natural History & Notes**
Leaves sensitive to touch, closing rapidly around the flowers and fruit when disturbed.

**RFK Code**
4072