

Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants - Online edition

Cheilocostus potierae (F.Muell.) M.G.Harr. & Zich

Family:

Costaceae

Harrington, M.G. & Zich, F. (2012) *Telopea* 14(1): 9.

Stem

Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub up to 4 m tall. Usually multistemmed from underground rhizomes.



Leaves

Leaves about 20-30 x 6-8 cm, lateral veins diverging from the midrib at a very low angle and running parallel to one another. Petiole base forming a pubescent, longitudinally veined sheath about 2-4 cm long, completely enclosing the stem. Petiolar sheath with a truncate ligule (about 0.2-0.4 cm long) at the apex.

Flowers

Flowers produced in cone-like heads of overlapping red bracts. Flowers exceeding the bracts. Corolla 3-lobed, the largest lobe (labellum) quite conspicuous, about 2.5-3 cm diam. Upper surface of the labellum and the inner surface of anther filament hairy. Fertile stamens one, the filament broad and petaloid. Anther locules well below the apex of the filament.



Habit, leaves & flowers. © CSIRO

Fruit

Fruit ovate-elliptic, about 1.5 cm long. Calyx persistent at the apex of the fruit. Outer surface of the fruit clothed in short erect hairs.



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO

Seedlings

Seed germination time 97 days. First pair of leaves simple, longitudinally veined, petioles forming a cylindrical sheath enclosing the stem. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves longitudinally veined, petiole forming a longitudinally veined cylindrical sheath enclosing the stem. Pale hairs present on the lower surfaces of the leaf blade and the outer surface of the sheathing petiole. Ligule clothed in pale hairs.

Distribution and Ecology

Endemic to Queensland, occurs in CYP and NEQ with collections from some of the Torres Strait Islands and the Tully and Daintree areas. Altitudinal range very small, being found only slightly above sea level. Usually grows in disturbed areas of lowland rain forest.

Synonyms

Costus potierae F.Muell., (1864) *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae* 4: 164. Type: Queensland, Rockingham Bay, 17 Apr. 1864, J. Dallachy, s.n.; lecto: MEL. Fide R. M. Smith, Fl. Australia 45: 453 (1987). *Costus speciosus* (Konig) Smith, *Transactions of the Linnean Society of London, Botany* 1 : 249 (1791) pro. parte. misapplication.

RFK Code

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