

Cucumis anguria L. var. *anguria*

Family:

Cucurbitaceae

Meeuse, A.D.J. (1958) *Blumea Supplementary Series* 4: 200.

Common name:

West Indian Gherkin

Stem

A slender trailing or climbing annual herb, all parts densely hispid; stems ribbed, to 3 m long x 4 mm diameter. Tendrils simple, clothed in hispid hairs; tendrils leaf-opposed.

Leaves

Leaf blades broadly ovate, cordate at base, deeply 3-5 lobed; blades about 35-95 x 40-90 mm, petioles about 15-60 mm long; both upper and lower leaf surfaces and the petioles densely clothed in hispid hairs.

Flowers

Inflorescences unisexual. Male flowers: solitary or borne in fascicles of 2-10 flowers, or in pedunculate groups; flowers about 8 mm diam; calyx tube (hypanthium) about 3-3.5 mm long, lobes linear about 0.5-2 mm long; corolla lobes ovate about 3.8-6 mm long, yellow; stamens 3, two stamens with 2-locular anthers and one stamen with a unilocular anther. Female flowers: solitary; pedicels 10-95 mm; ovary 7-9 mm long, bristly.

Fruit

Fruit ellipsoidal, 35-60 x 20-28 mm, densely and shortly prickly or warted, green with paler bands, ripening yellow; seeds 4-6 mm long.

Seedlings

Cotyledons elliptical, about 17-18 x 11-12 mm. First leaf simple, ovate, second leaf simple with a lobe on each side at the base. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blades about 65 x 59 mm, petioles about 35 mm long, margins deeply lobed. Tendrils present. All plant parts densely clothed in long, multicellular, simple, spine-like hairs.

Distribution and Ecology

An introduced species of West Indian origin now naturalised in WA, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as north-eastern New South Wales. Altitudinal range in northern Australia from near sea level to 720 m. Usually grows in open disturbed areas and sometimes on edge of vine thickets and other rainforests. Widely naturalised elsewhere in the world.

Synonyms

Cucumis anguria L., *Species Plantarum* 2: 1011 (1753), Type: "Habitat in Jamaica."

RFK Code

2705



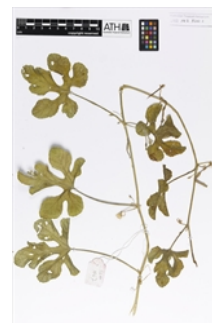
Flower and leaves. © CSIRO



Fruit. © K.R. McDonald



Habit, leaves and fruit. © K.R. McDonald



Herbarium sheet. © Australian Tropical Herbarium



Cotyledon and 1st leaf stage, epigeal germination. © Australian Tropical Herbarium



10th leaf stage. © Australian Tropical Herbarium

