

# *Dendrocnide cordifolia* (L.S.Sm.) Jackes & M.Hurley

## Family:

Urticaceae

Jackes, B.R. & Hurley, M. (1997) *Austrobaileya* 5: 122.

## Common name:

Stinger; Gympie

## Stem

Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub 1-4 m tall.

## Leaves

Twigs, petioles and both the upper and lower surfaces of the leaf blade clothed in stinging hairs which inflict long-lasting pain. Petioles long, often longer than the leaf blade and attached to the edge of the leaf blade. Leaf blades often large, about 16-22 cm diam. Lateral and reticulate veins depressed on the upper surface.

## Flowers

Flowers small, densely packed in inflorescences about 4-9 cm long. Each male flower surrounded by numerous female flowers in each inflorescence. Perianth about 1 mm long, clothed in translucent stinging hairs. Ovary glabrous.

## Fruit

Infructescence short and dense, borne in the leaf axils, fruits very small. Nuts or achenes about 2 mm long, resemble small seeds and are surrounded by the fleshy swollen receptacles or pedicels. Style moribund but persistent at the apex of the fruit.

## Seedlings

Cotyledons +/- orbicular, about 4 mm diam. First pair of leaves opposite or subopposite and clothed in stinging hairs, margin toothed. At the tenth leaf stage: all parts clothed in stinging hairs, leaf base cordate, petiole long, often longer than the leaf blade, stipules about 4-6 mm long, 2-awned at the apex. Seed germination time 27 to 28 days.

## Distribution and Ecology

Endemic to Queensland, occurs in NEQ. Altitudinal range from 100-1200 m. Usually grows in disturbed areas (particularly where the soil has been disturbed by tractors during logging) in upland and mountain rain forests. Sometimes found at lower elevations when adjacent to high mountains.

## Natural History & Notes

All parts of this species inflict a painful sting which can last for months. If someone receives a significant sting over a wide area of a limb, as a result of being hit hard by the plant, little or no sleep will be obtained the first night following the sting. Major stings cause the affected tissue to exude lymph and pains are experienced in lymph glands in the armpit or groin. Working among plants and disturbing them cause fits of sneezing and copious production of mucous from the nasal membrane.

## Synonyms

*Laportea cordifolia* L.S.Sm., *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland* 70: 31(1959), Type: Queensland, ca. 4 miles S.W. of Atherton, Forestry Reserve 99 Western, 4 Sept. 1957, L.S.Smith 10132; holo: BRI/.

## RFK Code

3242



Flowers and fruit [not vouchered].

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Inflorescences and young leaf [not vouchered]. © G. Sankowsky



Leaf [not vouchered]. © G.

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Habit and leaves [not vouchered].

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10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO

