

Diospyros calycantha O.Schwarz

Family:

Ebenaceae

Schwarz, O. (1927) *Repertorium Specierum Novarum Regni Vegetabilis* 24 : 93. Type: Port Darwin, Jervais road, dry jungle (Bleeser no. 156 u. 160, no. 161 u. 638).

Common name:

Cape ebony; Ebony, Cape

Stem

Usually grows into a tree 10-20 m tall but also flowers and fruits as a shrub.

Leaves

Leaf blades about 4.5-15 x 2.5-6.5 cm. Twigs and petioles +/- glabrous. Twigs about 1-2 mm diam. Lateral veins 9-14 pairs, curving but only forming indistinct loops inside the blade margin. Glands mostly 3-7, scattered on each side of midvein on basal half of lamina.

Flowers

Male inflorescence shortly branched, 3-6 flowers. Male flowers: pleasantly perfumed; calyx about 2.5 mm long, 4-lobed at the apex, lobes about 0.5 mm long or reduced to small teeth; corolla tube 6-8 mm long, 4(-5) lobes recurved and about 5 mm long, glabrous; stamens about 14-16, mostly joined in pairs, and attached to the base of the corolla tube; anther filaments dimorphic, 1-3.5 mm long, anthers dimorphic, about 1-2 mm long; rudimentary ovary hairy. Female flowers mostly solitary; calyx tube 3.5-4 mm long, lobes 4, spreading; corolla tube 6-6.5 mm long, tubular, lobes 4, recurved; staminodes mostly 6 or 7; ovary ovoid, appressed hairs near base, nearly glabrous towards style, 8-locular; style 3 mm long, stigmas shortly bi-lobed.

Fruit

Fruits seated on a 3 or 4-lobed, reflexed calyx. Calyx mainly glabrous on the outer surface, inner surface (forming the seat for the fruit) densely clothed in prostrate silky hairs which completely cover the surface. Fruits globular or depressed globular, glabrous at all stages. Seeds about 10-12 x 6-8 mm. Embryo about 7-7.5 mm long. Cotyledons straight, about 4-4.5 mm long, wider than the straight radicle.

Seedlings

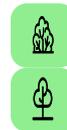
Cotyledons elliptical, about 27-29 x 14-15 mm. One very small scale-like cataphyll produced just above the cotyledons. First leaves ovate to elliptic-oblongate, apex obtuse or retuse, base cuneate. Hypocotyl black, sparsely hairy. Roots black. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade elliptical, much paler on the underside. Midrib flush with the upper surface. Stems zigzagged, dark red in colour and clothed in short erect hairs. Seed germination time 40 to 45 days.

Distribution and Ecology

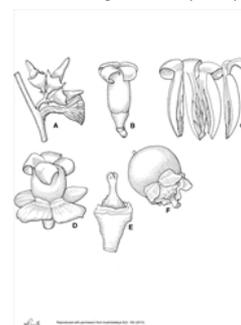
Occurs in WA, NT, CYP and NEQ. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 250 m. Usually grows in gallery forest or other types of riparian forest but also found in monsoon forest and vine thickets. Also occurs in New Guinea.

RFK Code

1067



Leaves and fruit. © Australian Plant Image Index (APII).



A. male flower buds; B. male flower; C. dissected male petals showing stamens; D. female flower; E. dissected female flower showing ovary; F. fruit. © Queensland Government.



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



Cotyledon and 1st leaf stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



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