Duboisia myoporoides R.Br.

Family:

Solanaceae

Brown, R. (1810) *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae* : 448. Type: New South Wales, Port Jackson, R. Brown, syn: BM, K, MEL, NSW, P. (Fide Purdie et al. 1982.).

Common name:

Soft Corkwood; Mgmeo; Poison Corkwood; Poisonous Corkwood; Corkwood Tree; Eye-opening Tree; Eye-plant; Duboisia; Yellow Basswood; Elm; Corkwood

Stem

Seldom exceeds 30 cm dbh. Bark pale brown, thick and corky, blaze usually darkening to greenish-brown on exposure.

Leaves

Leaf blades about 4-12 x 0.8-2.5 cm, soft and fleshy, indistinctly veined. Midrib raised on the upper surface.

Flowers

Small bell-shaped flowers present during most months of the year. Calyx about 1 mm long, lobes short, less than 0.5 mm long. Corolla induplicate-valvate in the bud. Induplicate sections of the corolla and inner surfaces of the corolla lobes clothed in somewhat matted, stellate hairs. Corolla tube about 4 mm long, lobes about 2 mm long.

Fruit

Fruits globular, about 6-8 mm diam. Seed and embryo curved like a banana or sausage. Seed +/- reniform, about 3-3.5 x 1 mm. Testa reticulate.

Seedlings

Cotyledons narrowly elliptic to almost linear, about 5-8 mm long. First pair of true leaves obovate, margins entire. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade +/- spathulate, apex rounded, base attenuate; midrib raised in a channel on the upper surface; petiole with a ridge down the middle. Seed germination time 31 to 264 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as south-eastern New South Wales. Altitudinal range in CYP and NEQ from near sea level to 1100 m. Grows in disturbed areas and on the margins of well developed rain forest on a variety of sites. Also occurs in New Caledonia.

Natural History & Notes

This species is rich in alkaloids and the leaves have been harvested commercially for the extraction of scopalamine. Cases of poisoning have been reported in cattle, horses and humans. Everist (1974).

This species may have medicinal properties. It is also poisonous.

Duboisia is probably the most important of the Australian native medicinal plants. The leaves are a valuable source of the alkaloid drugs, scopolamine and hyoscyamine. Cribb (1981).

RFK Code

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Flowers. © G. Sankowsky

Habit, leaves and flowers. © CSIRO

Fruit. © G. Sankowsky

Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO

10th leaf stage. © CSIRO

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Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO

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