

Leea rubra Blume ex Spreng.

Family:
Vitaceae

Sprengel, C.P.J. (1824) *Syst. Veg.* 1: 670. Type: No locality, Blume s.n.; L. Fide Ridsdale (1974).

Stem

Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub about 1-2 m tall, occasionally to 3 m. Stems quite pithy but vascular rays visible in the vascular tissue around the periphery.

Leaves

Stipules rather large, about 2-4 cm long, sheathing the terminal bud and adhering to the base of the petiole, leaving an inconspicuous scar when shed. Compound leaves about 20-50 cm long. Leaflet blades about 5-14 x 1.5-5 cm. Stalk of the terminal leaflet longer than those of the lateral leaflets. Terminal leaflet stalks about 11-14 mm long, lateral leaflet stalks about 0.5-5 mm long. Lateral veins curving and forming fairly distinct loops just inside the blade margin. Veins running between the lateral veins are more or less at right angles to the midrib. Midrib raised on the upper surface of the leaflet blades, ornamented with soft hook-shaped structures. Similar structures also present on the midrib on the lower surface of the leaflet blades. Compound leaf rachis grooved on the upper surface.

Flowers

Inflorescence red, leaf opposed. Pedicels and peduncles bright red. Flowers about 4-4.5 mm diam. Calyx tube about 1 mm long, lobes about 1 mm long. Corolla tube about 2-3 mm long, lobes about 1.5-2.5 mm long, hooded, covering the anthers in bud. Staminal filaments attached to the outside of the disk but arched over so that the anthers are hanging. Anthers about 1 mm long, filaments about 1.25-1.5 mm long when extended. Pollen pale yellow. Style about 1 mm long. One ovule per locule.

Fruit

Calyx 5-lobed, persistent at the base of the fruit. Fruit about 8-11 mm diam. Seeds about six per fruit, each seed about 4-5 x 4 mm. Endosperm ruminant in a crescent shaped band. Embryo very small, linear, about 1 mm long, cotyledons slightly wider but much shorter than the radicle.

Seedlings

Cotyledons ovate, about 15 x 12 mm, margin undulate. First pair of leaves +/- orbicular or cordate, margins toothed. Petioles winged, base of the petiole clasping the stem. At the tenth leaf stage: leaflet blades ovate or lanceolate, about 4-9 x 2.5-4.5 cm, apex apiculate to mucronate, base cordate to obtuse, margin dentate. Stipules about 19-20 mm long enclosing the terminal bud and attached to the base of the petiole. Stem and petiole reddish pink or crimson. Stem longitudinally ribbed. Seed germination time 183 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in NT and CYP. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 400 m. Grows in disturbed areas of lowland and upland rain forest and monsoon forest. Also occurs in SE Asia and Malesia.

Natural History & Notes

This is a useful indoor plant grown in a tub. Leaves are large and tripinnate. Flowers are red in tight bunches.

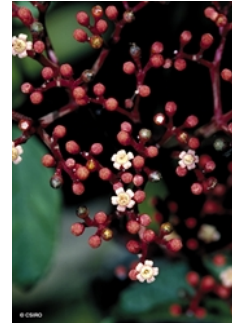
This species may have medicinal properties.

Synonyms

Leea brunoniana C.B. Clarke, *Journal of Botany* 19: 166 (1881), Type: Australia, R. Brown, n. 5272; Port Darwin, Schultz. n. 627.

RFK Code

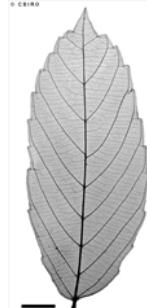
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Flowers and buds. © CSIRO



Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



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