

Macaranga tanarius (L.) Mull.Arg.

Family:

Euphorbiaceae

Mueller Argoviensis, J. (1866) *Prodromus* 15: 997.

Common name:

Kamala; Blush Macaranga; MACARANGA; Heart Leaf; Hairy Mahogany; Davids Heart; Parasol Leaf Tree; Nasturtium Tree

Stem

Seldom exceeding 30 cm dbh. Narrow brittle brownish stripes in the outer blaze.

Leaves

Leaf peltate. Pith of freshly broken twigs producing a clear exudate which turns pink or red on exposure. Numerous small white or yellow scales visible with a lens on the underside of the leaf blade. Leaf blades about 8-21 x 7-10 cm.

Flowers

Floral bracts large, margins fimbriate. Flowers about 1.5-2.5 mm diam. Outer surface of the tepals sparsely pubescent but lacking any obvious glands. Ovary covered with pale, almost white, glands and green trichomes or bristles +/- arranged in six vertical rows.

Fruit

Capsules muricate, but the surface densely clothed in yellowish glands. Seeds +/- globular, but laterally compressed, about 4-5 mm diam. Testa rugose.

Seedlings

Cotyledons broadly elliptic to orbicular, about 16 mm diam., upper surface hairy, undersurface sometimes with numerous small yellow glands. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade broadly ovate, base peltate, hairy on the upper surface, numerous small yellow glands on the underside visible only with a lens; petiole and terminal bud densely clothed in whitish hairs; stipules triangular, papery, hairy on the midrib. Seed germination time 30 to 31 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in NT, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards to north eastern New South Wales. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 750 m. This species is favoured by disturbance and grows in gaps in well developed rain forest or on the margins of well developed rain forest. It is a typical regrowth species on the coastal lowlands. Also occurs in Asia, Malesia and the Pacific islands.

Natural History & Notes

This species may have medicinal properties and it may also be an intoxicant.

The leaves of this species are regarded as a contraceptive. Cribb (1981).

Synonyms

***Macaranga tanarius* var. *genuina* Mull.Arg.**, *Prodromus* 15(2.: 998(1866). ***Ricinus tanarius* L.**, *Herb Amboin* : 14(1754), Type: Indonesia. ***Macaranga tanarius* var. *glabra* F.Muell.**, *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae* 6: 183(1868), Type: nuper prope flumen Liverpool-River collecta est.

RFK Code

464



Floral bracts and male flower. ©

Barry Jago



Habit, leaves and inflorescences.

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Fruit [not vouchered]. CC-BY J.L.

Dowe



Glaucous stem and immature fruit.

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Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO

