

Piper umbellatum L.

Family:
Piperaceae

Linnaeus, C. (1762) *Species Plantarum* 2: 43. Type: Domingo, Lecto: Plate in Plumier, Descr. Pl.Amer. 53, t 73 (1693) Fide Huber, in Dassanayake & Fosberg Rev. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 6 :298 (1987).



Stem

Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub about 1-2 m tall.

Leaves

Leaf blades orbicular to almost cordate, about 20-30 cm diam., petioles about 10-15 cm long. Petioles completely sheathing the stem when young but ruptured by the expanding buds leaving a narrow wing towards the base. Older twigs marked by leaf scars encircling the twig. Twigs very pithy. About ten or more veins radiate from the base of the leaf blade. Numerous brown glands visible with a lens on the underside of the leaf blade.

Flowers

Flowers very small, arranged in tight spirals on a cylindrical spike measuring about 30-110 x 2-3 mm. Each flower subtended by a peltate bract.

Fruit

Infructescence narrowly cylindrical. Seeds very small, about 0.5 mm diam.

Seedlings

Cotyledons orbicular, about 1.5-2 mm diam. First pair of leaves +/- cordate arising almost at the same point as the cotyledons. First pair of true leaves, cordate, underside clothed in short erect white hairs. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade cordate, apex acuminate, somewhat aromatic when crushed. Petiole exudate slightly milky. Stipules about 25 mm long on the petiole and sheathing the terminal bud which splits the petiole as it expands. Stipules becoming dry and papery as the leaf expands. Stem longitudinally ribbed, stems and petioles hairy. Seed germination time 40 to 62 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in CYP, NEQ and CEQ and has been recored near Nambour in SE Queensland. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 800 m. Grows in the more open or disturbed areas in lowland and upland rain forest. Also occurs in Malesia and Philippines.

Natural History & Notes

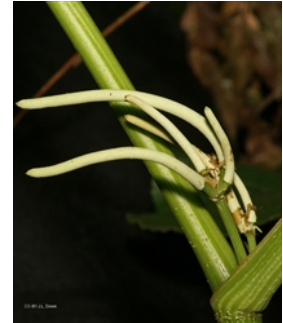
This species may have medicinal properties.

Synonyms

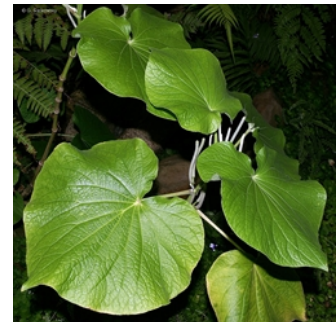
***Piper subpeltatum* Willd.**, *Species Plantarum* 1: 166(1797), Type: Amboina, Lomba, Rumphius, Herb. Amb. 5: 133, t. 59/1 (1750) Fide Verdcourt (1996) & Tropicos. ***Piper umbellatum* var. *subpeltatum* (Willd.) C. DC.**, *Annuaire du Conservatoire et Jardin Botaniques de Geneve* 11-12: 57(1908). ***Pothomorphe subpeltaa* (Willd.) Miq.**, *Comm. Phytogr.* : 37(1840).

RFK Code

3366



Flowers. CC-BY J.L. Dowe



Leaves and flowers [not vouchered]. © G. Sankowsky



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



Web edition hosted at <https://apps.lucidcentral.org/rainforest>