

Pittosporum ferrugineum Dryand. ex W.T.Aiton

Family:

Pittosporaceae

Dryander, J. in Aiton, W.T. (1811) *Hortus Kewensis* 2: 27. Type: Cultivated K, Nat. of Guinea. Introd. before 1787, by the Earl of Tankerville. Fide Cooper (1956).

Common name:

Rusty Pittosporum

Stem

A small tree not exceeding 30 cm dbh. Blaze odour resembles that of Lime (*Citrus aurantifolia*) or Western Lime (*Eremocitrus glauca*).

Leaves

Leaf blades about 6-13 x 2.5-5 cm. Midrib raised in a depression on the upper surface of the leaf blade, petiole pubescent, channelled on the upper surface. Leaf bearing twigs pubescent.

Flowers

Sepals linear to linear-lanceolate, about 2.5-3.5 x 0.6-1.2 mm. Petals about 7-9 x 1.2-1.5 mm. Stamens about 4-6.5 mm long. Ovary about 3-4 x 0.8-2 mm.

Fruit

Capsules globose, 2-valved, about 7-10 mm diam. Valves less than 1 mm thick. Placentas with funicles attached from the base to the middle. Seeds about 15-16, aril or sarcotesta sticky.

Seedlings

Cotyledons narrowly ovate to linear, about 12-22 mm long. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade elliptic or obovate, apex acuminate, base cuneate, upper surface glabrous or with a few hairs near the base on the midrib; petiole, stem and terminal bud clothed in pale brown, mostly prostrate hairs. Cataphylls may be present at about the 9th-12th leaf stage. Crushed roots have an odour like Lime. Seed germination time 36 to 72 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in NT, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as south east Queensland. Altitudinal range from sea level to 600 m. Grows in monsoon forest and dry rain forest but its preferred habitat is beach forest. Also occurs in SE Asia, Malesia and the Solomon Islands.

Natural History & Notes

This small tree has potential in horticulture and is noted for ease of culture, the masses of small white flowers and the yellow fruits.

This species has been used as a fish poison and in the treatment of malaria.

Synonyms

***Pittosporum linifolium* R.Cunn.**, *Annals of Natural History* 4 : 109(1839), Type: In ora orientali inter tropicam: ad fluvium Endeavour dict., 1819, A. Cunningham. ***Pittosporum ovatifolium* F.Muell.**, *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae* 2: 78(1861), Type: In clivis siccis insulae Albany Island Australiae septentrionali-orientalis. ***Pittosporum queenslandicum* Domin**, *Repertorium Specierum Novarum Regni Vegetabilis* 11: 201(1912), Type: Queensland: Keppel Bay, Rob. Brown (Iter Australiense 1802 -1805, no 5449).

RFK Code

377



Flower and buds. © Barry Jago



Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



Flowers. © CSIRO



Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



Leaves, fruit and dehiscent fruit. © CSIRO



Fruit, side views and dehiscent. © W. T. Cooper



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO

