

Planchonia careya (F.Muell.) R.Knuth

Family:

Lecythidaceae

Knuth, R. (1939) *Das Pflanzenreich Heft 105(1)* : 56.

Common name:

Cocky Apple; Cockatoo Apple; Billy Goat Plum; Apple, Cocky; Apple, Cockatoo; Plum, Billy Goat

Stem

Deciduous tree 4-15 m tall. Bark up to 2 cm thick, suberose, fissured, grey-brown to black.

Leaves

Papery (papyraceous), glabrous, discolorous, glossy above, dull on lower surface, aging red; obovate to broadly ovate, the smallest leaves spatulate, 50-120 x 28-76 mm; apex emarginate to bluntly acuminate, tip obtuse; finely crenulate or sometimes almost entire; base long attenuate; midrib flat above; lateral nerves in 9-12 pairs, forming indistinct loops inside the blade margin, angled at 60 degrees to midrib; petiole 6-32 mm long.

Flowers

Racemes with few, large flowers; pedicels puberulous, 5-20 mm long. Calyx tube green, 7-15 mm long; largest lobes 6-11 x 4-8 mm, the smallest 4-6 x 3-4.5 mm. Petals white, pink at the base, greenish on the back, 15-32 x 6-14 mm. Staminal tube 4-11 mm long; filaments ca. (90)120-170 per flower, 25-45 mm long. Style 35-70 mm long.

Fruit

Fruits +/- ovoid to ellipsoid, smooth, about 50-96 mm long (including calyx lobes) x 18-37 mm wide, calyx persistent. Seeds flat, about 5 x 4 mm, brown, embedded in a fibrous mesocarp.

Seedlings

Cotyledons linear-elliptic, about 5-15 mm long. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves +/- obovate, apex obtuse, base attenuate, margin crenate and undulate, leaf blade about 50-70 x 20-30 mm; midrib raised on the upper surface; stipules small and inconspicuous; petiole narrowly winged, the wings extending down the stem to the next leaf. Hypocotyl swollen, +/- carrot-like (*Daucus carota*). Seed germination time 10 to 13 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in WA, NT, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as coastal central Queensland. Altitudinal range from sea level to 600 m. Grows mainly in open forest but also found on the margins of rain forest and in monsoon forest. Also occurs in New Guinea.

Natural History & Notes

The bark of this species is a well known fish poison in North East Queensland.

Food plant for the larval stages of the Copper Jewel and Common Tit Butterfly. Common & Waterhouse (1981).

This species has been used as a fish poison. It may also have medicinal properties. The fruit has been reported as edible. (<http://www.sgapqld.org.au/bushtucker4.html>)

The bark of this tree contains saponin, a chemical which makes a soap-like froth when boiled in, or shaken with, water. Cribb (1981).

Synonyms

Barringtonia australis Ewart & O.B.Davies, *The Flora of the Northern Territory* : 199(1917).

Careya australis (Benth.) F.Muell., *Systematic Census of Australian Plants* : 60(1883).

Barringtonia careya F.Muell., *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae* 5: 183(1865), Type: Between the Victoria River & Keppel Bay, F. Mueller s.n. **Planchonia crenata** Miers, *Transactions of the Linnean Society of London, Botany ser. 2, 1* : 91(1875), Type: Cape Grafton, J. Banks & D. Solander; syn: BM; Carpentaria, R. Brown; syn: BM; Darwin, R. Schomburck 347; syn: K; Victoria R., F. Mue

Cumbia australis Britten, *Illustrations of the Botany of Captain Cook's Voyage Round the World 2* : t. 1(1901), Type: Cape Grafton, J. Banks & D. Solander; holo: BM. **Careya arborea** var. **australis** Benth., *Flora Australiensis* 3: 289(1867), Type: N. Australia. Brunswick Bay, N.W. coast, A. Cunningham; plains at the mouth of the Victoria river, F. Mueller; Islands of the Gulf of Carpentaria. **Barringtonia arborea** (Roxb.) F.Muell., *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae* 5: 184(1865).



Flower [not vouchered]. CC-BY

J.L. Dowe



Fruit, two views and cross section.

© W. T. Cooper



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO

Careya arborea Roxb., *Plants of the Coast of Coromandel* 3 : 14(1820), Type: A native of the valleys amongst the mountains of the Northern Circars, as well as various other mountainous parts of India.

RFK Code

960

Copyright © CSIRO 2020, all rights reserved.



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