

Solanum erianthum D. Don

Family:

Solanaceae

Don, D. (1825) *Prodromus Florae Nepalensis* : 96. Type: Nepal, near Katmandu, 1821, Wallich Herb. 2646; Lectotype: Field No. 1511, Roe, Brittonia 19: 359 (1967).

Common name:

Potato Tree; Tobacco Tree; Tobacco, Wild; Nightshade; Flannel Bush; Wild Tobacco

Stem

Occasionally grows into a small tree but usually flowers and fruits as a shrub.

Leaves

Twigs, petioles and leaf blades unarmed but densely clothed in stellate hairs. Stellate hairs present on both the upper and lower surfaces of the leaf blade but more numerous on the underside. Leaf blades about 8-24 x 4-15 cm, petioles 1-10 cm long. Lateral veins about 6-9. Crushed leaves emit a strong odour.

Flowers

Inflorescence branched, many-flowered. Pedicels about 5-10 mm long, densely stellate hairy. Calyx 4-7 mm long, lobes about 1-2.5 mm long, both stellate hairy on the outer and inner surfaces. Corolla about 13-19 mm diam., stellate hairy on the outer surface but glabrous on the inner surface. Anthers about 2.5-3 mm long. Ovary clothed in straight hairs.

Fruit

Fruits globular, about 10 mm diam., stellate pubescent on the outer surface. Seeds about 1.5-2 mm long. Embryo horseshoe-shaped, cotyledons about as wide as the radicle.

Seedlings

Cotyledons lanceolate or +/- orbicular, about 5-9 x 4-6 mm. First pair of leaves alternate, clothed in pale simple and stellate hairs. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves lanceolate, densely stellate hairy on both the upper and lower surfaces. Stem, petiole and terminal bud also stellate hairy. Seed germination time 17 to 383 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in NT, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as north-eastern New South Wales. Altitudinal range in CYP and NEQ from 250-1000 m. Grows in disturbed areas in upland rain forest particularly along roads. Usually found in areas where the rainfall is at the lower end of the range which supports rain forest and where the nutrient status of the soil is higher than average. Also occurs in Central America, Africa and Asia but generally thought to be indigenous to Australia.

Synonyms

Solanum verbascifolium L., *Species Plantarum* : 184(1753), Type: Habitat in America.

RFK Code

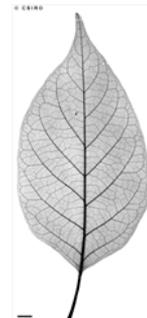
3214



Leaves, flowers and fruit. © CSIRO



Leaves, flowers and fruit. © CSIRO



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



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