

# *Vigna marina* (Burm.) Merr.

Family:  
Fabaceae

Merrill, E.D. (1917) *An Interpretation of Rumphius's Herbarium Amboinense* : 285.

Common name:  
Cowpea, Notched; Sea Bean; Notched Cowpea

## Stem

A slender vine not exceeding a stem diameter of 2 cm.

## Leaves

Leaflet blades about 5-6 x 3.5-4.5 cm, leaflet stalks about 2 mm long. Leaflets 3 veined at the base. Stipules ovate to lanceolate, peltate or medifixed.

## Flowers

Inflorescence about 6-14 cm long. Calyx about 4-5 mm long. Petals: standard about 12 x 16 mm; wings about 12-13 mm long. Stamens 10, filaments of nine fused to form a tube open on one side, one stamen completely free. Ovary about 4-5 mm long, constricted at the base and bearded towards the apex. Ovules seven or eight.

## Fruit

Fruits about 30-65 x 6-7 mm. Seeds +/- globose, 4-5 mm diam., 3-7 per fruit. Cotyledons thick and fleshy. Radicle straight.

## Seedlings

First leaves ovate to ovate-elliptic, apex acute to apiculate, base obtuse to cordate. Stipules present. Leaf blades 3-veined, glabrous on the underside. Third leaf trifoliolate, stipules present. At the tenth leaf stage: leaflet blades +/- orbicular, middle leaflet larger than the lateral leaflet blades, apex mucronate or retuse with a mucro, base shallowly cordate. Both the upper and lower leaflet blade surfaces sparsely clothed in appressed, translucent hairs. Stalk of the middle leaflet pulvinate and longer than the stalks on the lateral leaflets. Stipules cordate or peltate, about 3 mm long. Stipels present. Stem sparsely clothed in translucent hairs, stems twining. Seed germination time 8 days.

## Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in NT, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards as far as coastal central New South Wales. Usually grows on or close to beaches. Usually found close to sea level in northern Australia. Also occurs in Asia, Malesia and the Pacific islands.

## Natural History & Notes

This species may have medicinal properties.

This species has been used medicinally in the Solomon Islands, Samoa and the Caroline Islands. Cribb (1981).

A species with some pasture potential in higher-rainfall areas; also recommended for stabilizing foreshores. Roots were roasted and eaten by Aborigines. Hacker (1990).

## Synonyms

*Phaseolus marinus* Burm., *Ind. Alt* [18] : ().

## RFK Code

2687



Flowers. © CSIRO



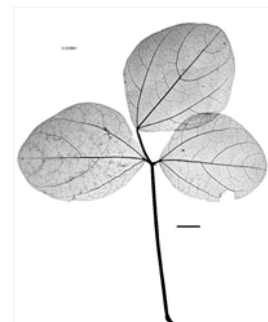
Leaves and Flowers. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



1st leaf stage, cotyledons absent.  
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Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



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