

QUININE BUSH

Alternative name: Strychnine Tree, Bitter Bark, Quinine Berry

FAMILY: EUPHORBIACEAE

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Petalostigma pubescens*



Form and size:

Relatively slow growing attractive shrub to small tree.

Leaves:

Simple, alternate entire, ovate to elliptic 2-10cm long.

Adult leaf -

Topside: dull to glossy

Underside: dull yellowish grey because of the dense cover of felty hairs

Bark:

Grey and black with short wide vertical ridges.



Flowers:


A dioecious species, both male and female forms need to be grown if fruit and seed are required.

Pale creamy brown flowers.

Male flowers occur in axillary clusters and females are solitary.



Male flowers

Flowering Period:	Any month
Fruit:	Drupes, spherical with eight vertical grooves, 12-17mm in diameter, mostly four celled, felty hairy, orange-yellow. January to October
Ecological notes	Eaten by the Emu. Larval food plant of the Copper Jewel Butterfly
Cultivation:	Grow from fresh seed or cutting. A hardy plant except in frosty areas. Grows in sand and gravelly soil.
Distribution:	<p>Widespread and common in a range of situations including dry eucalypt, woodlands, stream lines and rainforest edges. Located in Papua New Guinea, Queensland, Northern Territory. Limited distribution in northern Western Australia and New South Wales.</p> 

OTHER INFORMATION

Disclaimer: Rotary Club of Capricorn Coast can not take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before ingesting any part of a plant or using a plant medicinally.

The foliage may be poisonous if eaten. The Quinine Bush is used in the rehabilitation of Central Queensland mines and other sites.

QUIZ TIME

1. **Where do the male flowers grow on the tree?**
 - a. at the base of the leaf stem
 - b. at the end of the branchlet
 - c. on the trunk
 - d. on the roots

2. **Which bird eats the fruit of the Quinine Bush?**
 - a. rosella
 - b. cockatoo
 - c. kookaburra
 - d. emu

3. **What tropical disease has the Quinine Bush been known to help treat?**
 - a. Dengue
 - b. Malaria
 - c. Ross River Fever
 - d. Zika Virus

ANSWERS:

1. A
2. D
3. B

REFERENCES

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Williams, P., Kirkpatrick, S., Griffith University. Centre for Coastal Management, & Gold Coast (Qld.). Council. (2009). *Coastal Plant Pocket Guide*. Griffith Centre for Coastal Management.

Image 1

Sutton, I. (2012). *Petalostigma pubescens* fruit.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/22616984@N07/7430195030>

Image 2

Paten Park Native Nursery. (n.d.). *Petalostigma pubescens* tree.

<https://ppnn.org.au/plantlist/petalostigma-pubescens/>

Image 3

Aardvark, E. (2008). *Petalostigma pubescens* bark.

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Image 4

Fox, G. (n.d.). *Male Flowers - Petalostigma pubescens*.

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Image 5

The Australasian Virtual Herbarium. (2022). *Petalostigma pubescens*.

https://avh.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?taxa=Petalostigma+pubescens#tab_mapView