

SCALY EBONY

Alternative name: Queensland Ebony

FAMILY: EBENACEAE

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Diospyros geminata*



Form and size:

A small slow growing tree, usually not exceeding 4-6m in height

Leaves:

Dull to glossy green simple alternate leaves.
Dark green above and paler beneath.
Broadly oval, 2.5-5cm long, blunt, or rounded apex, often tapered to the base.
Somewhat leathery with a waxy appearance.
3-4 visible glands on the under surface toward the base.

Bark:

Bark of mature trees: blackish, fissured, and scaly.

Flowers:

Separate male and female flowers.
Small creamy to green in colour.



Flowering Period:


July to March

Fruit:

An oval berry 8-12mm x 6-8mm held in a prominent cup-like calyx (the outermost section of a flower).
Yellow ripening to orange/red.
Sometimes paired, hence "*geminata*", meaning twins.
The berries are astringent when unripe but sweet and palatable once the fruit has turned deep orange-red.

Ecological notes

Eaten by Rose-Crowned Fruit Dove, Emerald Dove and Pied Imperial Pigeon as well as larval food for moths.
Host plant for Cephenes Blue Butterfly.

Cultivation:	Propagate from seed. Grow from cuttings with difficulty.
Distribution:	Northern Territory and Queensland. Monsoon forest, dry rainforest, vine thickets and gallery forest. 

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.*

Sign of Good Diversity

If you see this tree, it is usually a good indication that you are looking at a patch of remnant dry rainforest, because it is not commonly planted and is very slow growing. It is unlikely to compete well with weeds. Its presence is a sign of good diversity. You should find other less common plants there as well. This indicates that the area has not been catastrophically cleared.

QUIZ TIME

1. Finding this tree indicates:

- A sign of good diversity.
- There will be other less common trees nearby.
- It's in a patch of remnant dry rainforest.
- All of the above

2. The flowers are:

- Separate male and female
- Are both male and female

3. The bark of this tree is:

- fissured
- blackish
- scaly
- All of the above

ANSWERS:

1. D
2. A
3. D

REFERENCES

CSIRO. (2020). *Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants*.

Melzer, R., & Plumb, J. (2011). *Plants of Capricornia*. Belgamba.

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

Paten Park Native Nursery. (2022). *Diospyros geminata* fruit.

<https://ppnn.org.au/plantlist/diospyros-geminata/>

Image 2

Paten Park Native Nursery. (2022). *Diospyros geminata* tree.

<https://ppnn.org.au/plantlist/diospyros-geminata/>

Image 3

CSIRO. (n.d.). *Diospyros geminata*.

https://apps.lucidcentral.org/rainforest/text/entities/diospyros_geminata.htm?zoom_highlight=Diospyros+geminata

Image 4

The Australasian Virtual Herbarium. (2021). *Diospyros geminata*.

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

