

Cocky Apple



S Robins



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S von Fahland

FAMILY: Lecythidaceae

HABIT: Small, deciduous tree with coarse, rough, fissured, corky bark and crooked branches.

LEAVES: Simple, alternate, ovate to obovate to about 17 x 8cms, with a winged stalk and a prominent mid-vein; margin entire or slightly toothed; dull green above and paler beneath. They turn bright orange-red before falling.

FLOWER/FRUIT: Nocturnal flowers with white petals have long, showy, white stamens that are united into a pinkish tube at the base. The four celled, smooth green ovoid fruits, about 5cm long, are crowned by persistent calyx lobes. They contain several seeds inside fleshy pulp and mature in summer.

PROPAGATION: The seed needs to be removed from the mushy pulp before sowing.

LOCAL HABITAT: Littoral forest, eucalypt forests and woodlands.

DISTRIBUTION: Queensland, northern Western Australia, Northern Territory and New Guinea.

GENERAL: Aborigines used the bark as a fish poison and to make string for nets and belts. The leaves and stems were also used for medicinal purposes.

Fruit eaten by the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo and larvae of the yellow peach moth.

Nectar eaten by Rainbow Lorikeets, Little Friarbirds and numerous honeyeaters.

REFERENCES: Alcock & Champion, 1998 *One Hundred and One Trees of Mackay*.
Melzer & Plumb, 2007 *Plants of Capricornia*.