



Lantana camara

VERBENA FAMILY

Verbenaceae

COMMON NAMES

English: curse of India, lantana, Spanish flag, tickberry, prickly lantana, white sage; Cambodia: phka chenh chien, phka kang, phka arch meann; Indonesia: kembang telek, tembelean, tahi ayam
Lao PDR: dok mai khiu; Myanmar: sein-na-ban; Philippines: asin-asin, bahu-bahu, sapinit, sapor, sari-sari, sibsibit; Thailand: pagaknong; Vietnam: bông ổi, cây ngũ sắc

DESCRIPTION

Compact, untidy long-lived shrub/scrambler (up to 2 m or higher), forming dense thickets; stems are usually green turning grey or brown with age, square in cross-section with short hairs and hooked/recurved prickles/thorns.

Leaves: Dark green, rough hairy, simple, egg-shaped (2–13 cm long and 1.5–7 cm wide) with pointed tips, margins toothed/rough, wrinkled appearance, held opposite each other on stems, smell strongly when crushed.

Flowers: Small red, pink, crimson, orange, yellow or white flowers borne in dense clusters (2–4 cm across), with each cluster containing about 20–40 flowers; clusters on stalks (2–10 cm long); individual flowers are tubular (9–14 mm long and 4–10 mm across).

Fruits: Berries (fleshy fruits that don't open at maturity), initially shiny green turning purplish-black when mature (5–8 mm across), one-seeded.

ORIGIN

Bahamas, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, Mexico and Venezuela.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

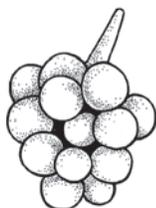
Hedging/barrier and ornament.

INVADES

Roadsides, railways, disturbed land, wasteland, plantations, managed pasture, drainage ditches, forest edges/gaps, woodland edges/gaps, grassland, savannah, water courses, lowlands and gullies.

IMPACTS

Lantana forms dense impenetrable thickets reducing biodiversity and threatening the continued existence of a host of rare and endangered species. Turner and Downey (2010) identified 275 plant and 24 native animal species in Australia that are threatened by the presence of lantana. In crop production systems in Southeast Asia, it reduces yields and increases management costs for those growing durian, pineapple, banana and rubber (Waterhouse, 1993). It is also toxic to livestock with pastoral losses in Queensland in 1985, estimated to be A\$ 7.7 million, as a result of 1,500 animal deaths, reductions in productivity, loss of pasture and control costs (van Oosterhout, 2004). In South Africa, lantana poisoning accounts for about 25% of all reported livestock poisoning by plants (Wells and Stirton, 1988). There have also been some recorded fatalities in people, after consumption of the green fruit. Lantana can also alter fire regimes, allowing fires to penetrate into forests and woodlands.



Lantana camara L.

