

••• — 6 — Description of Seventy Important Plants •••

~~~~~→ *Conocarpus erectus* – Button wood - to be continued →

| Name                                                   | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| ☼ → to be continued → <b><i>Conocarpus erectus</i></b> | <p><b>Used Parts, Solvents, Preparation, Dosage:</b><br/>with warm water, perhaps after draining the ash out, this was another joint remedy. These both were used as a bath for external use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The boiled leaves also as a tea, weak or strong, to induce vomiting.</li> </ul> |



B--117-Conocarp-erect-black-Button-w-23-9-09.jpg

**Contents and Effects:**

- Charcoal • Skin diseases • Diabetes • Perhaps to induce vomiting in higher amounts • Joint soothing in external use.

**Indications as to Diseases:** • (more the black button wood):

- **Rheumatism:** • Bath from the boiled leaves helps to make supple the joints. Warm bath from the steeped ash of a dry branch.
- **Skin, sores, and cuts:** • Boil the leaves and use as a wash for sores.
- **Induce vomiting:** • Boil leaves and drink the liquid at intervals when vomiting is wanted.
- **Others:** • The tea of leaves of black buttonwood also is used in some areas to strengthen the body and also as a good tea for people with diabetes.

**Toxicology, Side Effects, Contraindications:**

- Anything that induces vomiting may have some toxic effects in the way of losing acids (from the stomach) and electrolytes, but I haven't found anything about toxicity in literature, and also the use as an emetic seems to be very rare.

| Name                              | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| ☼ <b><i>Cordia Bahamensis</i></b> | <p><b>Synonyms and Local Names:</b><br/>• <b><i>Cordia Bahamensis</i></b>, Urb., Symb. Ant. = <b><i>Varronia bahamensis</i></b>, (Urb.) Millsp. (<i>Lat.</i>), (<b><i>Boraginaceae</i></b> = Borago- or Forget-me-not family = Clammy Cherry family = Raublatt, Borretsch in <i>German</i>)<br/>• Unambiguous Synonyms: • <b><i>Cordia stenophylla</i></b>, Alain and <b><i>Varronia angustifolia</i></b>, West Ex Willd<br/>•• Cocobey • Roughleaf • Granny Bush.</p> <p><b>Remarks, History, Legends:</b><br/>• Valerius Cordus, a German botanist and physician (1515-1544), was the first to report this tree.<br/>• In The Bahamas it had a long tradition as “Granny bush” mainly for postpartum treatments. Midwives were highly skilled substitutes for medicinal doctors till the ‘60s, when they were abandoned. Plants to help women around pregnancy and birth were called “Granny bush.” Five plants were used in different islands like this Cocobey (<b><i>Cordia Bahamensis</i></b>), as the “main Granny bush” often combined with <b><i>Croton linearis</i></b> as “white Granny bush.” Also the Obea-bush (<b><i>Petiveria alliacea</i></b>) was used as Granny bush. • Commonly the slender branches of Cocobey were used as brooms, and after the leaves fell off they still were good to sweep the yards, sometimes still today.<br/>• “Roughleaf” is applied to many <b><i>Cordia</i></b> species as their leaves have a rough surface or pattern.</p> <p><b>Habitats, Description, Cultivation:</b><br/>• The Bahamian <b><i>Cordia</i></b> or Cocobey is endemic to Florida, Cuba, and Anegada, and of course to The Bahamas. This was verified by student interns during research at University of Düsseldorf, September 2008. So this plant would be interesting for further pharmaceutical research. The typical coastal shrub or sometimes tree is found in coppices and savannas.</p> <p><b><i>Cordia</i> in General:</b><br/>• <b><i>Cordia</i></b>, a genus of the <b><i>Boraginaceae</i></b>, consists of more than 320 species distributed in warm, temperate, and tropical regions. Besides <b><i>Cordia Bahamensis</i></b>, some are important in the Caribbean, like <b><i>Cordia Lucayana</i></b>, nearly only in the south; <b><i>Cordia myxa</i></b>, of which the fruit also called „Myxa plum” or “Sebesten plum” was used against cough, even by the old Egyptians; and <b><i>Cordia Sebestena</i></b>, of which the wood was for carving and the fruit also against cough. These indications seem not to be common in The Bahamas to my knowledge.<br/>• <b>Habit:</b> • Bahama Cocobey usually grows as a many-branched shrub to 3 feet high, or a small tree up to 12 feet (near 4 m) high with slender branches.</p> |

• • • — 6 — Description of Seventy Important Plants • • •

~~~~~→ *Cordia Bahamensis* – Granny Bush – Rough leaf -- to be continued →

| Name | Details |
|---|---|
| ☼ → to be continued → <i>Cordia Bahamensis</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foliage: • The alternate leaves on shorter petioles are quite variable: shape from linear oblong to obovate or elliptic. Length from 2-10 cm (a near inch to 4 inches). Width to about 2 inches (5 cm). They are entire but also can be slightly toothed at the margins. |



B--326-Cordia-baham-Granny-bush-19-Feb-09.JPG

- **Inflorescence:** • The flower heads also vary from a few to many small flowers per head with 4- or 5-lobed calyces, triangular lobes. The fruits are ovoid drupes red to black, about 4 mm long. In Long Island two variations of Cocobay are used with different fruits: one is black and one is white, and both are good to eat even with the seed.

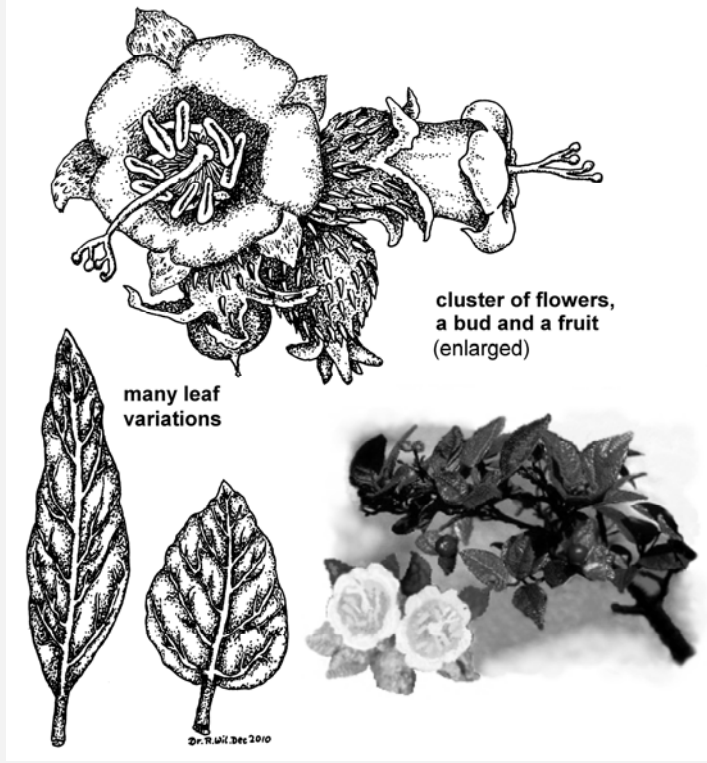
Used Parts, Solvents, Preparation, Dosage:

- In some species especially the healthy fruits were used in different Caribbean countries, including the seeds. • As medicine (often mixed with other plants), the leaves are used as a bath, decoction, or tea. Fruits and leaves can be boiled as a tea to drink and as a mix for bathing women and babies.

Contents and Effects:

- Did not find information about the contents, but the tea and bath were mostly for postpartum uses and other diseases of women around birth. • Tonic after birth.

***Cordia bahamensis* • Cocobey • Roughleaf • Granny Bush**



Z---Cordia-Baha-Cocob-Granny-B-Str-Dez-10.jpg

- Soporific • Worms • The fruits of ***Cordia myxa*** and ***Cordia sebestena*** were slowly eaten against cough, the latter one even by old Egyptians.

Uses as Food:

- The two kinds of fruits of Cocobay (black or white kind) are both good to eat. Open the seed and eat the skin, which looks white and fleshy and is nice. One also can eat the "nut."

Indications as to Diseases:

- **Women:** • Tonic after birth and many diseases of women around birth. • Midwives used to give it to women as a strong tea for about nine days after delivery of the baby to strengthen them again and against blood clots, etc., and "to prevent the womb from getting a cold from winds." • A bath was also made for mother and baby, often mixed with other plants.
- **Worms:** • Also used as mild worm expellant.

Toxicology, Side Effects, Contraindications:

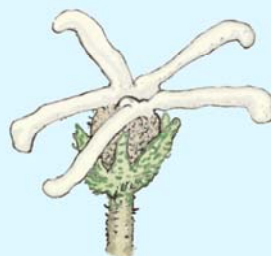
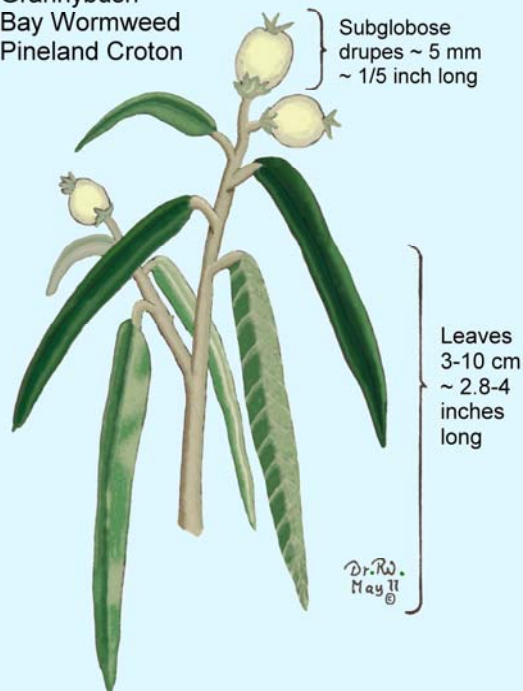
- Not known so far.

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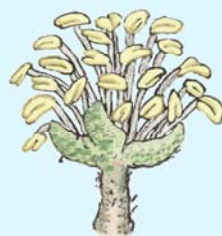
| Name | Details |
|--------------------------|--|
| ☼ <i>Croton linearis</i> | <p>Synonyms and Local Names:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Croton linearis</i> (Lat.), Jacq. • (Plant Family: <i>Euphorbiaceae</i> = Spurge Family (one author: Wintergreen Family = German: Wolfsmilchgewächse) • Granny-Bush • Bay Wormweed • Rosemary, Rock Rosemary, Jamaican Rosemary, Seaside Rosemary (it is not the “real” <i>Rosemarinus officinalis</i> but resembles it, so it is also called <i>Croton rosmarinoides</i> in some literature). <p>Remarks, History, Legends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names are confusing, as the name “rosemary” refers to the strong aromatic scent. Of course, the “real” <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> is a different plant, which is more used in Cat Island and Jamaica. The name “linearis” comes from that really prominent midrib underneath. Also this particular croton is quite different from the more familiar ornamental garden crotons, which belong to the <i>Croton diacum</i> species within the same family. • The name “granny bush” is applied to plants used by former midwives to treat anything around pregnancy, birth, and ailments of women and babies. This differs from island to island pretty much. So Bay-Wormweed (<i>Croton linearis</i>), Cocobey (<i>Cordia Bahamensis</i>), and <i>Cordia brittonii</i> and guinea henweed = Obeah-bush = garlic weed (<i>Petiveria alliacea</i>) often are named so. • Dried twigs of <i>Croton linearis</i> formerly even were assembled to make a rustic broom, as people did with other plants also. • “Rosemary” twigs (<i>Croton linearis</i>) were used in some magical and religious ceremonies because of their long-lasting, strong smells. Also people burnt some specimens in houses they saw as haunted to discourage unwanted ghosts. In Jamaica they called them “duppies,” in The Bahamas “Obeah.” Voodoo practices became seldom in The Bahamas, but some people still believe in the magic powers of certain plants. • Very practically, people also used the plants as an insecticidal against bed bugs. |

Croton linearis

Seaside Rosemary
Grannybush
Bay Wormweed
Pineland Croton



Pistillate (female, ovary-bearing) flower about 4 mm ~ near 1/5 inch long



Staminate (male, pollen-bearing) flower ~ 1-3 mm long ~ roughly 1/10 inch

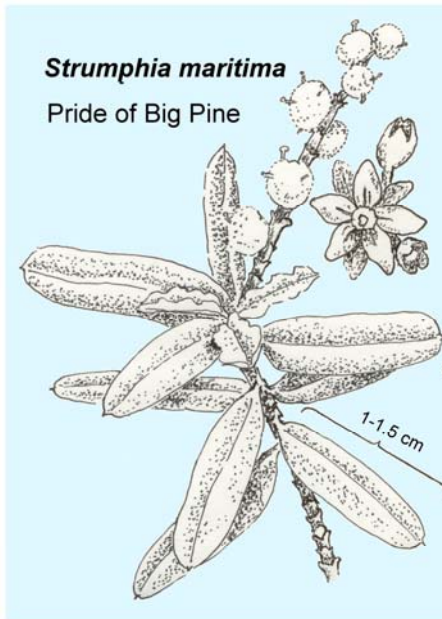
Habitats, Description, Cultivation:

- Endemic to The Bahamas, Florida, and the West Indies, growing mostly in rather dry environments and on rocky land near the ocean-side in sandy and gravelly soils, and open areas. Like other crotons, the many species prefer warmer areas of the world or are cultivated inside in pots. At the coasts they live on rocks or sandy ground, sometimes forming extensive thickets up to 9 feet (3 m) high, protecting the area from erosion.
- Student interns in Germany verified the above during research at University of Düsseldorf, September 2008, making this plant interesting for further pharmaceutical research.

•• — 6 — Description of Seventy Important Plants ••

~~~~~→ *Croton linearis* – Granny Bush – Bay Wormweed – Rock Rosemary -- to be continued →

| Name                                                       | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <p>☼ → to be continued → <b><i>Croton linearis</i></b></p> | <p><b>Habitats, Description, Cultivation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>General:</b> • <i>Croton</i> is a genus of the <b><i>Euphorbiaceae</i></b> family (Spurge) with herbs, shrubs, and trees, mostly dioecious (female and male are different plants) and strong-scented and many very variable species in the genus. Some are used medicinally, some are not researched yet, as it seems.</li> <li>• <b>Habit:</b> • <b><i>Croton linearis</i></b> is a small shrub to a foot tall with an odd foliage and the branches spreading out in different directions. Aromatic and dioecious with yellowish, densely stellate twigs.</li> <li>• <b>Foliage:</b> • The alternate growing leaves on short petioles are about 3.5 to 7 to 10 cm long, narrow (2-6 mm across), and have two very different sides: shiny and dark green above, and below very flossy with a thick, prominent midrib. As to the leaves, two variations can be distinguished: one coastal variant with broader leaves, and one more cosmopolitan variation with relatively long and narrow leaves. The rest is the same. They yield an aromatic, rosemarylike fragrance, hence the name.</li> <li>• <b>Inflorescence:</b> • The minute, dioecious whitish flowers are on small racemes. Staminate (pollen bearing, male) flowers are usually uppermost. They are a bit longer than the female ones, usually 5-parted with fifteen or more stamens. Pistillate (female, ovary-bearing) flowers usually have a 5-parted calyx. The sepals are narrow, acuminate. If present, the petals are rudimentary. Bluming time all year round.</li> <li>• <b>Fruits:</b> • The inconspicuous, subglobose capsule with a yellowish pubescence is about 5 mm long. The seeds are oblong, dark greenish brown. They can be to 3 mm long and 2.8 mm broad.</li> </ul> |



Don't confuse ***Croton linearis*** (*Euphorbiaceae*) as shown here with ***Strumphia maritima*** (monogeneous species of the *Rubiaceae*):

- Leaves of ***Croton linearis*** are longer and less dense than in ***Strumphia maritima***.
- Of the dioecious flowers of ***Croton linearis***, the pistillate ones also have 5 white petals, but they are narrower than the star-like ones of ***Strumphia maritima***.
- Fruits from ***Croton linearis*** are subglobose, those from ***Strumphia maritima*** globose.

**Used Parts, Solvents, Preparation, Dosage:**

- Leaves, twigs, young branches are used.
- The crushed leaves have already a little effect from the released fragrant oils for bronchi and head colds when inhaled. Also leaves mainly, but also young twigs or branches, are boiled as a tea or a decoction (strong tea) to drink and be used as a bath for several indications as well.

**Contents and Effects:**

- Contains high amounts of salicylates, which are known for their pain-reducing and anti-inflammatory activities. This is why it helps similar to aspirin against inflammatory and painful ailments of different kinds.

**Croton in General in Medicinal Use:**

- Depending on area many croton kinds are used for medicines. Really proven to have medicinal effects is the croton oil obtained from ***Croton tiglium*** with a similar purgative effect as for castor bean oil!

Book-1-Pic-Croton-Lin+Strumph-mar-4--Hinterg.jpg

**Indications as to Diseases:**

- **General and main indications:** • The green, scrubby, leafy type of plant can be boiled and applied to woman after birth as a tea to “close the coccyx in,” a wired expression meaning to contract all the expanded muscles to get back to normal. Also the tea is good to prevent a hangover after drinking. A hot bath or steam bath for women after their menstruation period is over to feel better.
- **After childbirth:** • The brew of the leaves, tea, is given to women for nine days after childbirth to strengthen them, and is a good indication for pain after childbirth.
- **Severe pain during period:** • Helps against even severely painful period: one should boil a few leaves from the granny bush along with some kitchen soot and three fruit-pieces of pond top (***Sabal serratus***), each about three inches long, and drink.
- **Rheumatism:** • Against rheumatism in San Salvador and other islands as a decoction (strong tea)

## ••• — 6 — Description of Seventy Important Plants •••

~~~~~→ *Croton linearis* – Granny Bush – Bay Wormweed – Rock Rosemary -- to be continued →

| Name | Details |
|---|---|
| ☼ → to be continued → <i>Croton linearis</i> | <p>or tea (normal).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory system: • Crushed fresh, young leaves and stems release “fumes” with a strong smell, which can already loosen phlegm of bronchi, ease head colds, and also improve flu. • Colds, flu, influenza: • The tea eases symptoms of these diseases. Also it is helpful to relieve colic and menstrual cramps. • Skin: • Applied on insect bites and also used as a hair wash. • External uses: • A bath from the leaf and twig decoction not only yields a nice smell, it also is good to wash patients and new mothers, and to ease cold symptoms. <p>Toxicology, Side Effects, Contraindications: • Not known from this plant and use.</p> |

| Name | Details |
|------------------------------|--|
| ☼ <i>Cuscuta</i> spp. | <p>Synonyms and Local Names of some Important <i>Cuscuta</i> spp.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cuscuta americana</i>, <i>C. campestris</i> = <i>C. Pentagona</i>, <i>C. Gronovii</i>, <i>C. globulosa</i> (Lat.) •• (Plant Family: <i>Convolvulaceae</i> = Morning-Glory Family = Bindweed Family or an extra <i>Cuscutaceae</i> family). •• Love Vine (more for <i>Cathysa filiformis</i>) • Dodder (Vine) (<i>Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica</i>) • Vegetable spaghetti (<i>United States of America</i>) because of its appearance • Angel's Hair • Witches' Shoelaces • According to the weeds they parasite, <i>Cuscuta</i> species have many <i>Latin</i> and even more <i>English</i> common names, such as Coral Vine, Mexican Creeper, Hairweed, Hellbind, Devil's gut, Devil's vine, Hedge Lily, Rutland Beauty, Beggarweed, Strangle tare, Flax Dodder, Dodder of thyme, greater or lesser dodder or scaldweed, etc. • In <i>Chinese</i> <i>Cuscuta</i> seeds are called “tu si zi.” <p>Remarks, History, Legends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most <i>Cuscuta</i> species (<i>Convolvulaceae</i> or <i>Cuscutaceae</i>) resemble the <i>Cassytha filiformis</i> (<i>Lauraceae</i>) so much, that they often are confused, though they are not related!! <p><u>Here some hints to distinguish them:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •→ <i>Cassytha</i> has a spicy odor and grows on shrubs or trees. Most flowers are solitary, single. •→ <i>Cuscuta</i> species grow only on selected weeds. Most flowers are in more or less dense cymes. • “Love Vine” describes the “embracing” growth of these two plants, but also other vines are named as “Love Vines”: • <i>Cuscuta</i> (<i>Convolvulaceae</i>), <i>Cassytha filiformis</i> (<i>Lauraceae</i>), <i>Ipomoea lobata</i>, <i>Mina lobata</i>, <i>Ipomoea versicolor</i> or <i>Quamoclit lobata</i>, <i>Antigonon leptopus</i> (<i>Polygonaceae</i>), <i>Clematis virginiana</i> (Syn: <i>Clematis virginiana</i> L. var. <i>missouriensis</i>, (<i>Ranunculaceae</i>). • Also the name “Strangleweed” refers to the embracing, strangling properties, and “Angel's Hair” describes the hairlike yellow habit of the species named so. <p>Habitats, Description, Cultivation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Cuscuta</i> described here grows in The Bahamas and many temperate and tropical areas, but also in Europe, Asia, and North Africa. • Bahamian dodders can grow closer to oceans and salt spray, also depending on the habitats of the host plants. Often found in disturbed areas but they are not as common as the <i>Cassytha filiformis</i>! • Most of the about 150 species of <i>Cuscuta</i> worldwide grow in America. Some species select certain hosts, some “take what they get”– and “climb on everything.” Usually they choose a wider range of woody, shrubby, or herbaceous plants, even ferns and grasses. Some may climb on medium trees. • The <i>Cuscutas</i> (dodders) are parasitic vines, climbing, twining, and attaching onto their host plants with plant organs that can suck onto the host and draw nutrients out of them, eventually perhaps killing them. They usually are annual but can be biannual in some warmer areas. Some dodders are dependent just on one single host plant and will die if it is not found. Others can parasite a variety of different weeds. Some are even useful for certain butterflies and as a biocontrol, as they themselves may live on toxic, obnoxious weeds and kill them. • Habitus: • A mature dodder on the host plant looks like a branching network of yellow, threadlike, twining vines entangled in the plant with no beginning or end, sometimes overgrowing many plants like a network (like <i>Cassytha</i>). The vines vary in thickness from threadlike filaments to heavy cordlike vines. The color varies from yellow to some orange. Dry vines turn black. • Foliage: • The leaves are reduced to small scales, nearly invisible and no chlorophyll. • Inflorescence: • The minute, cream-white flowers are sessile or short-pedicellate and typically appear in few- to many-flowered cymose clusters. The calyx lobes vary and so the flowers may look quite different depending on species. • Mostly they flower from June to October. • Fruits: • The fruits are capsules which may burst irregularly to release the brownish seeds with a smooth or roughened surface. One dodder-plant produces a large number of seeds, which, once they are buried in the ground, can even survive fire and usually lay dormant for about 5 to 8 years. |