

Benstonea monticola (F.Muell.) Callm. & Buerki

Family:

Pandanaceae

Callmänder, M.W. et al (2012) *Candollea* 67(2): 336.

Common name:

Urchinfruited Pandan; Scrub Breadfruit; Screw Pine; Screw Palm; Palm, Screw; Pine, Screw

Stem

Occasionally grows into a small tree but usually flowers and fruits as a shrub about 2-3 m tall. Trunk with sparse spiny conical nodules (warty). Plants male or female. Prop roots absent.

Leaves

Leaf blades long and strap-like, up to 80-150 x 2-4 cm with numerous sharp teeth on the margin, along the midrib on the underside and on a couple of major veins on the upper surface towards the apex. Venation longitudinal with the reticulate veins forming a ladder-like network. Twigs and stems marked by +/- horizontal circular scars from the leaf bases.

Flowers

A terminal spike. Inflorescences enclosed in large cream or white bracts. Anthers 4-celled, 6-8 x 1 mm, tapering to a fine point at the apex.

Fruit

Fruit a multiple fruit, globular, red, about 6-12 cm diam., consisting of a large number (more than 300) of discrete segments each of which is produced from a separate female flower. Each segment about 28-32 mm long overall, ending in a spine-like persistent style. Embryo very small, located near the base of the fruiting carpel.

Seedlings

First pair of true leaves have sharp spine-like teeth on the margins and also along the midrib on the underside of the leaf blade. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade linear, sessile, with numerous closely spaced sharp spine-like teeth along the margins and along the midrib on the underside of the leaf blade. Venation longitudinal with the reticulate veins forming a ladder-like network. Marginal spines point upwards while the midrib spines point downwards. Leaf bases sheathing the stem. Seed germination time 84 to 181 days.

Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in NEQ from Cedar Bay south to Hinchinbrook Island. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 840 m. Grows as an understory plant in undisturbed lowland and upland rain forest.

Natural History & Notes

May be distinguished from all other species of *Pandanus* in Australia by the scabrid (rough) peduncle of the inflorescences.

Synonyms

Pandanus monticola F.Muell., *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae* 5: 40 (1865), Type: e montibus sinui Rockingham Bay. *Pandanus pluvisilvaticus* H.St.John, *Pacific Science; a quarterly devoted to the biological and physical sciences of the pacific region* 21: 279 (1967), Type: Australia, North Queensland, Kuranda, Black Mt. Road, rain forest with Acacia, Calamu

RFK Code

3284



Male flowers [not vouchered]. CC-BY J.L. Dowe



Fruit © CSIRO



Fruit [not vouchered]. CC-BY J.L. Dowe



Fruit © CSIRO



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, hypogeal germination. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO

