

# Ant-Plant *Myrmecodia beccarii*

## IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

In the Family of Australian ant-plants there are two Genera of Rubiaceous ant-plants; **Myrmecodia** (domatia with spines and thick stems) and **Hydnophytum** (domatia without spines and thin stems).



Ant-plant **spines**: in the southern extent of its range (Wet Tropics), mature *Myrmecodia beccarii* have smoother domatia (fewer spines) than the spinier Cape York population. Note: seedlings lack spines. Photo: Cape York NRM



The bulbous **domatia** of *Myrmecodia beccarii* houses the Golden Ant and the larvae of the vulnerable Apollo Jewel Butterfly. Photo: Garry Sankowsky

## HABITAT

*Myrmecodia beccarii* is an epiphyte that grows on trees in lowland paperbark swamps & mangroves. It is **never** found in the rainforest (unlike *M. platytyrea* & *M. tuberosa* that are found in all 3 habitats).



Paperbark (*Melaleuca*) woodland. Photo: Cape York NRM



Mangrove forest. Photo: Cape York NRM

## STEMS

*M. beccarii* stems have indentations and **never** have shields (also called clypeoli).



Indentations. Photo: Cape York NRM



Shields. Photo: Melinda Greenfield

## FRUIT

**Creamy white** in *M. beccarii*, red/orange fruit in the other two species. Observed in the wet season only.



Creamy white jelly-bean like fruit. Photo: Melinda Greenfield

## FLOWER

All 3 species have white flowers (that can be confused with fruit from a distance).



Flower. Photo: Melinda Greenfield

## DOMATIA

(Lower part of stem/bulbous tuber): **no ridges on domatia of *M. beccarii***



Ridges absent. Photo: Melinda Greenfield



Distinct lines/ridges. Photo: Melinda Greenfield

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Report your sightings of an Ant-Plant at:  
[www.capeyorknrm.com.au/citizen-science/record-sighting](http://www.capeyorknrm.com.au/citizen-science/record-sighting)

