

# Dendrocnide photinophylla

## Shining leaved Stinging Tree



### Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Rosids
Order:	Rosales
Family:	Urticaceae
Genus:	<i>Dendrocnide</i>
Species:	<i>D. photinophylla</i>

### Binomial name

*Dendrocnide photinophylla*  
(Kunth) Chew

*Dendrocnide photinophylla*, the **shining-leaved stinging tree**, is a rainforest tree of eastern Australia. It occurs from near the Colo River northwest of Sydney to Cooktown in tropical Queensland. A versatile species, it occurs in many different rainforest types. The specific epithet *photinophylla* translates to shining leaf. The generic name translates to stinging tree.

## Common names

This species is known by many common names, including **fibrewood**, **small-leaved nettle**, **mulberry-leaved stinging tree**, and **gympie**.

## Sting



*D. photinophylla* seedling with pronounced stinging hairs on the upper surface of the leaf

Stinging trees are often disliked by bush walkers and nature lovers because of the reaction of human skin to the stinging hairs. However, they are an important member of the ecosystems of Australian rainforests. The sting of this plant is not considered as severe as the related *Dendrocnide excelsa* or *Dendrocnide moroides*. However, avoiding the leaves and twigs is strongly recommended.

## Description



Older *D. photinophylla* with the mature-form glossy leaves with stinging hairs restricted primarily to the leaf veins

A medium to large-sized tree up to 30 metres tall, its stem diameter is up to 75 cm. The trunk is flanged or buttressed. The grey bark is fairly smooth, but with some bumps, lines and ridges. Its small branches are smooth and grey, with green at the ends.

The leaves are glossy with erect stinging hairs, particularly on the leaf veins, and are elliptic in shape, 6 to 13 cm long, and 3 to 8 cm wide.

Male and female flowers sometimes on separate trees, appearing yellowish green from November to June on small panicles from the leaf axils. The fruit are unevenly shaped nuts or achenes, resembling a mass of white grubs; they mature from January to March. The fruit would be edible for humans if not for the stinging hairs; they are eaten by many rainforest birds, including the regent bowerbird and the

Torresian crow.

## Uses

Indigenous Australians used the fibres to make nets and bags.

## References

# Article Sources and Contributors

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