

**Solanum betaceum* (syn. *Cyphomandra betacea*)

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Cyphomandra fruits (tamarillos) from Wikipedia



From *Kew Bulletin* (1887), p. 3.



Sections of *Cyphomandra* fruits (tamarillos) from Wikipedia



Herbarium specimen (AD) of *Solanum betaceum*.



Herbarium specimen (AD).



Unusual anthers of *Cyphomandra* in which the filament is extended on to the back of the anthers. From Engler & Prantl's, *Die Natürlichen Pflanzenfamilien* IV, 3b, fig. 12 (1897).



Distribution map generated from Australia's Virtual Herbarium. For a more up to date map visit the AVH site through your local herbarium.

Synonymy

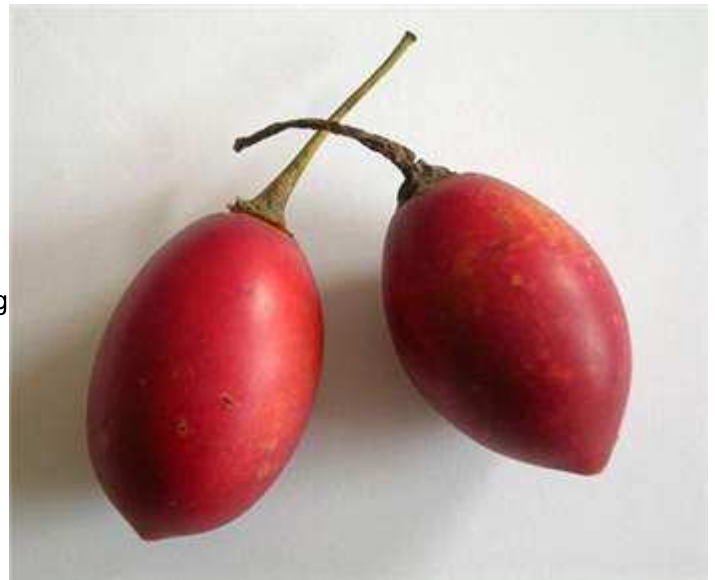
Solanum betaceum Cav. *Icon.* 6: 15, t. 524 (1800)

T: Spain, cultivated in Madrid 1798–1799, *Cavanilles s.n.*; lecto: MA308535 *fide* Bohs (1994). An image of the type in MA can be seen on the [Solanaceae Source](#) site.

Cyphomandra betacea (Cav.) Sendtner, *Flora* 28: 172; t. 4, figs 1–6 (1845).

The genus *Cyphomandra* was separated from *Solanum* on the basis of few technical characters such as the thickening of the connective at the back of the anther. This separation from *Solanum* has long been questioned. Recent sequencing of DNA places *Cyphomandra* species clearly with *Solanum*.

A recent monograph on this group of species as *Cyphomandra* may be found in L. Bohs *Cyphomandra* (Solanaceae), *Flora Neotropica*, Monograph 63 New York Bot. Gard. (1994) 1–176 and their transfer to *Solanum* in L. Bohs, *Taxon*, 44 (1995) 583–587.



Description

Small malodorous tree, pubescent with simple glandular hairs.

Leaves ovate, cordate at base with the lobes overlapping; lamina of the lower and juvenile ones to 35 cm long, 30 cm wide, others commonly c. 15 cm long, 12 cm wide, entire; petiole 5–15 cm long.

Inflorescence pendulous, cyme-like; pedicels 10–20 mm long. Calyx c. 5 mm long, the lobes broad, rounded. Corolla c. 20 mm diam., pink, fleshy, scented. Filaments c. 2 mm long; anthers 4–5 mm long, the connective broad and thick.

Ovary bluntly conical; style 5–6 mm long, stout.

Berry ovoid, 5–7 cm long, dark red, dull. Seeds disc-shaped, 3.5–4 mm diam. with wing 0.25 mm wide, pale reddish-brown.

Distribution and ecology

Native to South America. Infrequent escape from cultivation in subtropical areas of eastern Qld and north-eastern N.S.W.

Occurs in rainforest.

Common name

Tree Tomato, Tamarillo.

Relationships

Solanum betaceum belongs to the *Cyphomandra* clade of *Solanum* - see [Solanaceae Source](#).

Notes

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Cultivated for its edible fruit in many parts of tropical America, Asia, New Zealand, the Pacific region and Australia. Garden-grown in all Australian States with commercial plantings in subtropical areas.

Cultivation discussed by J. McD. Slack, Growing tamarillos (*Cyphomandra betacea*). *Agric. Gaz. New South Wales* 86: 2–4 (1976).

From the web

An image of *S. betaceum* can be seen on the [Eurobodalla Shire](http://eurobodalla.shire.vic.gov.au/) site and also on the Bean interactive key site at http://delta-intkey.com/solanum/images/sol_bet_klove.jpg

A photograph of this species by Hugh & Nan Nicholson can be seen on the [Terania Rainforest Publishing Photo Library](http://www.terania.com.au/) site.

A page on *Solanum betacea* as a threat in the Pacific can be found on the Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER) at www.hear.org/pier/species/solanum_betaceum.htm

An image of the flowers can be seen at <http://linus.socs.uts.edu.au/~7Edon/larvae/plants/sola/cyphomandra-betacea.jpg>

Another image with background information can be found on the Desert-Tropicals page at www.desert-tropicals.com/Plants/Solanaceae/Cyphomandra_betacea.html and images with cultivation notes at www.tradewindsfruit.com/tree_tomato.htm

Further information and links for this species can be found on the [Solanaceae Source](http://www.solanaceae.com/) site.

Information on pollination and fruit set (floral biology) of tamarillo in New Zealand can be found in Lewis & Considine (1999) *New Zealand J. Crop & Hort. Science* 27: 101-112, downloadable as a pdf at <http://www.rsnz.org/publish/nzjchs/1999/13.pdf>