



Morinda citrifolia "Noni"

Gerry McMahon, Senior Technical Officer, DPIFM Darwin

Name: Noni *Morinda citrifolia* (Rubiaceae).

Origin: Morinda is native to Malaysia, Australia and Polynesia. It has the ability to spread throughout tropical islands by floating seed and has in the past been cultivated in India and villages throughout South East Asia.

Distribution: Today it is found throughout the tropical regions of the Pacific Islands, South East Asia, India, the Philippines, Hawaii and the West Indies.

Australian Distribution: In Australia, Noni is found in far north Western Australia, the north coast of the Northern Territory and north east Queensland, on offshore islands, beach scrubs and waterways.

Preferred Climate and Soil Types: Noni will grow in most soils but prefers well composted well drained sandy loam soils. The tree is often found in coastal vine thickets on stabilised dunes or low cliffs above the beach. It is also found in monsoon forests near lowland streams, and does not tolerate drought or frost.

Description: Small evergreen tree to 8 m with slightly rough brown to dark grey bark. Leaves are opposite and elliptic, glossy dark green and slightly wavy with a prominent midrib and veins. Flowers are small white star shaped with a sweet scent, clustered on globular heads which develop into large fleshy fruit.

Culture: Grown from seed. Can be useful for screening or windbreaks and makes a good park specimen, but possibly unsuitable as a garden tree due to the strong offensive odour of the ripe fruit. Grown as a fruit crop in Arnhemland.

Pests and Diseases: None known but fruit fly could be a problem.

Fruiting Season: The fruit is available from July to December, but also periodically throughout the year.

Harvesting: The fruit is ripe when they change from a solid creamy colour to a translucent colour and produce an offensive odour rather like rotting cheese. Fruit collected from the ground are the best and are much sought after by the Aboriginal people.

Storage Conditions: Unknown but shelf-life is expected to be very short.

Culinary Use: Ripe fruit is eaten raw but has a powerful unpleasant odour with a strong taste and the seeds should not be eaten. If the fruit is eaten while it is still white and firm it is a little more palatable. Juice is also made from the fruit and has recently gained popularity as a health tonic. It is also used in traditional medicine.

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DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY
INDUSTRY, FISHERIES AND MINES

Crops, Forestry and
Horticulture Division

GPO Box 3000
Darwin NT 0801
Tel: 08 8999 2357
Fax: 08 8999 2049
Email: horticulture@nt.gov.au
Web: www.nt.gov.au/dpifm

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