PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Premna serratifolia* (Blanco) L.

**GENUS** *Premna* **FAMILY** Lamiaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Creek Premna, Coastal premna

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Fruit, Seeds, Leaves

The seeds are eaten by children in Tuvalu.
The ripe fruit have been eaten with yam in Vanuatu.
The leaves and tender shoots are cooked and eaten as greens. They are mixed with other vegetables and eaten with rice of meat. They are used to add flavour. The leaves are chewed as a substitute for betel leaves.
The fruit is eaten mixed with rice in the Andaman Islands.

## DESCRIPTION

A spreading shrub. It grows 2-4 m tall. It can be 12 m tall. The leaves are opposite and large. They are oval and shiny green. They are leathery and have prominent veins. The midrib is raised underneath the leaf. The flowers are in clusters near the ends of branches. They are greenish white. Fruit are small and green. They turn black at maturity.

## HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in coastal vine thickets and on dunes. It grows in sandy soil along sea coasts and mangrove forests. It grows from sea level to 500 m altitude in Samoa. In Fiji it is usually below 200 m altitude. It grows in sandy soils and limestone. Mt Cootha Botanical Gardens.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. It can be grown as a hedge.

## NOTES

Used in medicine.
Also put in the family Verbenaceae.
The leaves possibly improve a mother's milk supply.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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