

Acalypha indica

Scientific classification

Kingdom : Plantae
Order : Malpighiales
Family : Euphorbiaceae
Subtribe : Acalyphinae
Genus : *Acalypha*
Species : *A. indica*



A. indica

DESCRIPTION:

An erect annual herb that can be easily distinguished by the cup-shaped involucre that surrounds the small flowers in the catkin-like inflorescence. It can grow up to 1.2 m (3.9 ft) tall in favorable circumstances, but is usually smaller. The leaves are broad ovate, 1.2 cm–6.5 cm × 1 cm–4 cm (0.47 in–2.56 in × 0.39 in–1.57 in). The leaf base is rounded to shortly attenuate. The leaf margin is basally 5-nerved and is crenate-serrate with an acute or obtuse apex. The petiole is 1.5–5.5 cm (0.59–2.17 in) long. The flower spikes are axillary, 2.5–6 cm (0.98–2.36 in) long, monoecious, with a rachis terminating in a triradiate hood. The tiny male flowers are white-green, located on the upper part of the flower spikes, and are ebracteate, minute, and clustered with vermiculiform anthers. The pollens are roughly round and approximately 10–12 microns in diameter.

MEDICINAL USES:

- *Acalypha indica* is listed in the Pharmacopoeia of India as an expectorant to treat asthma and pneumonia.
- It was formerly listed in the British Pharmacopoeia. This plant is held in high esteem in traditional Tamil Siddha medicine as it is believed to rejuvenate the body.