

## *Alyxia ruscifolia*

(Apocynaceae)

- Common name:** Chain fruit.
- Localities:** Brisbane River Bank, Grandview Road, Kholo Creek, Moggill State Forest, Priors Pocket, Upper Brookfield.
- Growth form:** A dense and attractive stiff shrub to 3 m tall.
- Foliage:** Leaves are dark green and are stiff-textured; they are distinctively arranged in whorls of three to six, each leaf drawn out to a spine at the tip. Plants growing in some other districts have leaves which are very narrow or very broad.

**Flowers and fruit:** Flowers small, cream to white and propellor-shaped, fragrant, in axillary clusters. The fruit is orange, often in a chain of 2-4 rounded segments. Chain fruit flowers in late winter to spring.

**Habitat:** Subtropical and dry rainforest; also eucalypt forest in our area.

**Propagation and Management:** May be propagated from seeds or cuttings, but establishment and subsequent growth is slow. The species is tolerant of full sunshine but does better in some shade.

**General:** The dense prickly growth provides nesting sites for small birds. This is a distinctive species well worth including in a planting, particularly for its fragrant flowers. It is reputed to be attractive to fireflies.

