

## *Ficus coronata*

(Moraceae)

**Common name:** Creek sandpaper fig.

**Localities:** Bellbowrie Bridge, Brisbane River Bank, Grandview Rd, Kholo Creek, Moggill State Forest, Rafting Ground, Upper Brookfield; common along creeks in our district.

**Growth form:** A bushy shrub or small tree to 8 m tall, with an open crown.

**Foliage:** Leaves are simple, alternate, up to 14 cm long and 4.5 cm wide and are sometimes toothed along the margins. They have a rough, sandpaper texture.

**Flowers and fruit:** Flowers are minute, and are inside the young figs which form in leaf axils or clusters on older stems. The figs are hairy, about 2 cm long and are purple-black when ripe.

**Habitat:** Subtropical and dry rainforest, especially along creeks.

**Propagation and Management:** Seeds germinate readily when fresh, and the species may also be propagated from cuttings. Creek sandpaper fig is a hardy species and tolerates full sun and infertile soils.

**General:** Creek sandpaper fig is one of the more useful species for streambank stabilisation, and readily withstands flooding. The foliage is subject to attack by a brown beetle about 8 mm long, which can totally defoliate a tree, and young shoots may be attacked by borers. The fruit attracts fruit-eating birds, particularly fig birds, and also fruit bats. Fruit were eaten by Aborigines, who also used the rough leaves as sandpaper for fashioning weapons. Two other species of sandpaper fig are native to the district - *F. fraseri* (shiny sandpaper fig) and *F. opposita* (sandpaper fig).

