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*Embelia ribes*

[Synonyms : *Embelia garciniifolia*, *Ribesioides ribes*, *Samara ribes*]

**EMBELIA** is a climbing shrub. Native to India and Malaysia it has small, whitish-pink flowers.

It is also known as *Akar sulus kerang* (Malay), *Aroi kachembang* (Sundanese), *Barerang* (Hindi), *Babrung* (Punjabi), *Biranga* (Bengali), *Vayuvilang* (Tamil and Telugu), *Vidanga* (Sanskrit), *Viranga*, and *Wal-embilla* (Singhalese).

The dried fruit can be used to adulterate black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) with which at that stage it can easily be confused.

*Ribes* is made up of the genus name *Ribes* meaning 'like plants in that genus'.

The Javanese have eaten cooked young leaves and the immature fruit.

Medicinally, the dried fruit has been used in India particularly for expelling tapeworm, as well as for scorpion stings, and snake bites. A decoction of the bark and leaves is taken internally as a remedy for boils and some skin diseases, and it is also used to treat fevers and various respiratory ailments. An infusion of the roots has been used in Javanese remedies for easing diarrhoea and coughs. It has a reputation in some Asian countries as a contraceptive and these claims are the subject of current research.