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Solanum laciniatum

[Synonyms : *Solanum aviculare*, *Solanum aviculare* var. *laciniatum*, *Solanum reclinatum*, *Solanum vescum*]

KANGAROO APPLE is a shrub. Native to south-eastern Australia, to Tasmania and New Zealand, it has small violet-purple flowers.

It is also known as *Bulli-bull* (Maori), *Gelappter Nachtschatten* (German), *Känguruäpple* (Swedish), Large kangaroo apple, *Poroporo* (Maori), and Tasmanian kangaroo apple. The fruit skins of the damson-like green berries begin to burst when they are fully ripe and edible.

Warning – the leaves and unripe fruit are poisonous.

Kangaroo apple's green berries are similar to those of the poisonous Jerusalem cherry (*Solanum pseudocapsicum*).

Laciniatum is derived from Latin *lacer* (torn, mangled) meaning 'fringed or very deeply cut, torn or slashed into narrow divisions'.

Maoris used the sap to prime wood before it was painted and claimed that this improved the paint's adhesion and brilliance.

The fully ripe berries were eaten in New Zealand and Australia (both raw and cooked) long before Europeans were aware of the Country's existence. Early colonists in New Zealand used the very ripe fruit to make jam and the ripe fruit are still eaten today in both Australia, and New Zealand.

Medicinally, the plant is cultivated in New Zealand and eastern Europe for the fruit which are used in the manufacture of steroidal hormone birth control drugs and in preparations to ease rheumatoid arthritis.