

## *Phyllanthus tenellus* Roxb.

Common name: Mascarene Island leaf flower

Malayalam Name: Melarnelli

### Description:

Erect annual herbs 20-75 cm tall; stem simple or with permanent branchlets, subterete below, channelled above, glabrous. Leaves alternate, 0.5-2.1 × 0.3-1.1 cm, broadly elliptic to obovate, subacute at tip, acute to rounded at base; petioles 0.5-0.8 mm long; stipules lanceolate-acuminate, 0.8-1.2 × 0.2-0.3 mm. Flowers minute in axillary bisexual or unisexual cymes of 1-5 flowers. Male flowers 1.5 mm across, white, 1-3 in unisexual cymes of 1 or 2 proximal nodes and in bisexual cymes of succeeding 3-10 nodes with female flowers; pedicels filiform, 0.5-1.5 mm long; sepals 5, imbricate, broadly obovate, acute to rounded at apex, 0.5-0.7 × 0.5-0.8 mm, membranous, whitish. Female flowers 1.4-1.6 mm across, 1 or 2 in the bisexual cymes of proximal 3-10 nodes and solitary in the succeeding distal nodes; pedicels capillary, 2.5-6 mm long, terete basal olive green. Capsule depressed-globose, 1.3-1.5 mm across, greenish, smooth; stalk 4-6 mm long; seeds trigonous, 0.75-0.8 × 0.6-0.65 mm, densely papillose.

Distribution: Native range is Tropical Africa, SW. Arabian Peninsula and W. Indian Ocean. Naturalized in Many tropical Countries.

**Useful part:** Whole plant

### Uses:

The whole plant juice takes in empty stomach cure in jaundice and kidney problems. The leaf decoction continues three days' cure in stomach pain and peptic ulcer.

