



Callicarpa pedunculata – family: VERBENACEAE

VELVET LEAF

Small open sprawling shrub 1 to 3 metres
Tiny pinkish-mauve flowers October to November
Small purple bird-attracting fruit

Cultivation: Fast growing and adaptable; prefers a sheltered position with ample water and mulched soil.

This plant is not common but is widespread in and near warmer rainforests from the mid-north coast of NSW to north-east Qld and in Indonesia, southern China and the Philippines. It belongs to a family with many diverse members in the tropics and subtropics, including the beautiful Australian timber tree White Beech (*Gmelina leichardtii*), the garden annual Verbena (*Verbena hybrida*) and the notorious Lantana (*Lantana Camara*) from Central America, which has displaced Velvet Leaf in much of its natural habitat. Mites may sometimes cause leaf damage. Propagation is not difficult from cuttings or from the fruits. Easily grown if provided with ample water, mulch and fertilizer, but it dislikes extreme cold or exposure. Pruning can be undertaken to maintain a bushy shape.



Lewin's Honeyeater and Silvereye birds are attracted to the flowers and fruit.