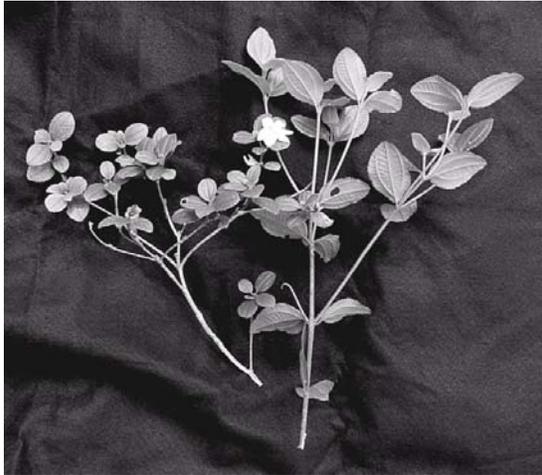


***Leandra krugii* (Cogn.) Judd & Skee**  
MELASTOMATACEAE

leandra

Synonyms: *Calycogonium krugii* Cogn.



**General Description.**—*Leandra* is an evergreen shrub usually 1 to 1.5 m in height and 1 to 3 cm in basal diameter, but rarely reaching 3 m in height and 6 cm in basal diameter. Multiple stems from basal sprouts are the rule and stems are covered with finely furrowed brown bark. Young plants have deep taproots; older plants have deep and extensive root systems. Branches and twigs are stiff, slender, and tend to grow vertically. Trichotomous branching is common. The green to dark-green leaves are opposite, usually oval to elliptic, rough, and coriaceous. They are 2 to 5.5 cm long and have a 6-mm petiole. Edges are serrulate. Five nerves are raised on the underside, the three principal ones radiating from a point above the base of the leaf. The six-parted white flower is about 3 cm across. Fruits (berries) are globose, bright red, and about 12 mm in diameter. They are edible and contain many minute seeds (author's observations, Liogier 1995).

**Range.**—*Leandra* is endemic to central and western Puerto Rico (Liogier 1995). It is not known to have been planted or naturalized outside Puerto Rico.

**Ecology.**—*Leandra* is intermediate in tolerance. As single plants and in thickets, it grows naturally in small openings and in the understory of low to moderate basal-area remnant and secondary forests, and in plantations. It occurs at elevations of about 600 to 1000 m in areas that receive from

about 1800 to 3000 mm of mean annual precipitation. The soils it grows on are usually moderately acid, loamy or clayey, deep or rocky, well drained to somewhat poorly drained Ultisols, Alphisols, and Inceptisols. These soils develop from sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic (ultramaphic) rocks. *Leandra* is most common on side slopes and ridge tops, in forest plantations, secondary forest, and primary remnants (author's observations).

**Reproduction.**—*Leandra* blooms during the late spring and early summer (April through June) and fruits during late summer and fall (August through October). The flowers appear to be insect pollinated. There are several million seeds per kilogram. They germinated profusely when smeared on the surface of potting mix and placed in a mist bed. The minute seedlings did not survive, however. The plant can be propagated by air layering. Thirty-nine of 46 air layers treated with 0.3 percent IBA on wild plants rooted in 6 months. Wild plants layer whenever branches come in contact with the ground. Woody cuttings treated with IBA (indol-butyric acid) and misted failed to successfully root. Apparently, birds are the principal dispersers of seeds. Reproduction can be abundant in shaded areas that have been disturbed (author's observations).

**Growth and Management.**—*Leandra* grows slowly as a seedling and at a moderate rate from sprouts. Plants appear to be relatively long-lived. Management experience is lacking or has not been published. Disturbance of the understory of forests in suitable habitat with low to moderate basal area in which mineral soil is exposed should result in the establishment of seedlings. Stands could be thickened by ground-layering existing plants.

**Benefits.**—*Leandra* adds to the aesthetics of the forests where it grows, helps protect the soil, and furnishes food and cover for wildlife. The convenient size, pretty flowers, and foliage (W<sup>3</sup>Tropicos 2002), as well as the attractive fruits suggest *leandra* as an ornamental.

## References

Liogier, H.A. 1995. Descriptive flora of Puerto Rico and adjacent islands. Vol. 4. Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR. 617 p.

W<sup>3</sup>Tropicos. 2002. *Calycogonium krugii* Cogn., flowering shrub. [http://digitalis.mobot.org/mrsid/bin/mosid/mosid.pl?client=203&image=MOA-06799\\_001.sid&title=Calycogonium+krugii+Cog...](http://digitalis.mobot.org/mrsid/bin/mosid/mosid.pl?client=203&image=MOA-06799_001.sid&title=Calycogonium+krugii+Cog...) 1 p.

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