

Sida cordifolia L.

Standardized Common Name: Heart-Leaf Sida

Other Common Names: Bala, Country Mallow, Flannelweed

Family: Malvaceae

Parts in Commerce: Leaves, sometimes with stems

Identification:

- Stems tough, densely woolly-pubescent with stellate and unbranched hairs
- Stipules 3–10 mm long, narrow, pubescent, not forming a spine; stipules of a single pair not differing greatly in shape
- Petiole 0.4–4.0 cm long, densely pubescent
- Leaves 1–8(–9) cm long, ovate to broadly ovate, or rarely orbicular or narrowly ovate to ovate-oblong
- Base cordate to subcordate or rarely rounded to rounded-truncate
- Apex acute to obtuse
- Margins dentate from base to apex

- Both surfaces soft to the touch, densely pubescent with branched hairs, usually also with unbranched hairs and glandular trichomes on some portions
- Venation pinnate, except that the first 1–3 pairs of secondary veins arise simultaneously at base of midrib

Sida rhombifolia L. (Arrow-Leaf Sida) may be considered interchangeable with *S. cordifolia* in traditional Ayurvedic medicine (in which the roots are most commonly used). This species includes two distinctive subspecies: subsp. *rhombifolia* has frequently rhomboid leaves, widest in the middle with a tapering base and acute apex, whereas leaves of subsp. *retusa* are widest near the apex, with a truncate to rounded apex. The stems are roughly rather than softly hairy, the upper surface of the leaves is glabrous or sparsely pubescent, and there is normally only one pair of secondary veins arising near the base of the midvein.

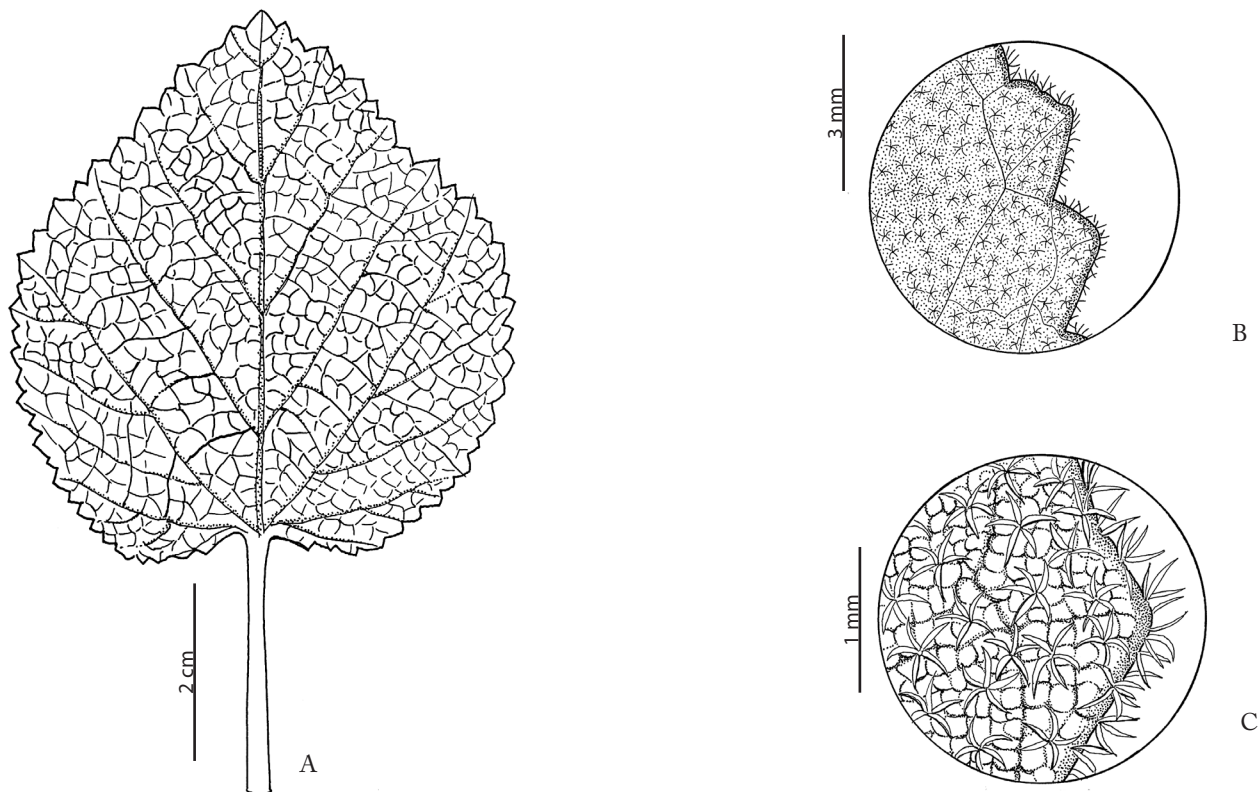


Figure 68: a–c, *Sida cordifolia* leaf and close-ups of upper and lower surfaces.

Taxonomy: *Sida* is a pantropical genus including about 150 to 200 species of shrubs and herbs. *Sida cordifolia* is rather weedy and is found in tropical and subtropical areas worldwide. Its closest relatives, a group of species classed as Sect. *Cordifoliae*, are primarily North and South American, with a few representatives in Australia.

Description: Subshrub to shrub, often annual, (0.1–)0.5–0.7(–1.5) m tall; twigs densely woolly-pubescent. Leaves stipulate, petiolate, ovate to orbicular or lanceolate-oblong, 1–8(–9) cm long; base cordate to rounded; apex bluntly acute to obtuse; margins dentate to crenate; both surfaces densely woolly-pubescent. Flowers solitary or rarely clustered in leaf axils or terminal in small dense clusters; pedicels usually jointed. Calyx 5–9 mm long, campanulate, 5-angled and strongly 10-ribbed, 5-lobed, densely woolly-pubescent; corolla rotate, 12–15 mm in diameter, 5-lobed, pale yellow to orange-yellow; stamens numerous, short, the filaments fused, clustered into 5 groups; ovary compound, with (5–)7–14 locules and styles. Fruit a globose schizocarp of (5–)7–14 mericarps, separating at maturity; mericarps flattened, 3-sided, 1-seeded, pubescent, with 2 stiff awns and reticulated lateral surfaces.

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