

Zornia latifolia

Zornia latifolia is a species of flowering plant in the legume family, Fabaceae. It is native to South America.[1] Its distribution may extend into Central and North America.[3] It is also known as a naturalized species in tropical western Africa.[1] The plant is known commonly as *maconha brava*. [4]

This plant is a perennial herb with a branching stem taking a prostrate form on the ground and growing up to about 50 centimeters long. The leaves are bifoliolate, each made up of two leaflets, which are widely lance-shaped and up to 4 centimeters long. At the base is a stipule up to a centimeter in length. The herbage is hairless to lightly hairy. The inflorescence is a spike of up to 35 yellow flowers each about a centimeter long. The flowers open for only 5 to 10 hours. The bractlets are longer than the flowers and may cover them. The fruit is a spiny, hairy legume pod.[5]

In its native range it grows in savanna habitat with acidic and low-fertility soils. It tolerates drought, but does not tolerate cold or shade.[5] In Africa it grows as a weed in lawns and on roadsides.[3]

The plant is susceptible to plant pathogens such as the fungi *Sphaceloma zorniae*, which causes scab disease, and *Meliola* species, which cause stunting and distortion of the leaves. Insect pests include the red-necked peanutworm moth (*Stegasta bosqueella*).[5]

This legume is a nutritious and palatable forage for livestock. It can be grown as a companion plant to grasses such as *Andropogon gayanus* and *Brachiaria decumbens*. [5]

A common component of many synthetic cannabis mixtures producing hallucinogenic effects, such as the street drug, 'Spice', though these mixtures effects are caused by synthetic cannaboids, *Zornia latifolia* may have cannabis-like effects.[6][7] It may be adulterated by a different Fabaceae plant, *Stylosanthes guianensis*, which is phytochemically different from *Zornia latifolia*. [6] The flavones genistein and apigenin may explain the cannabis-like effects of *Zornia latifolia*. [6]

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