

# CAYMAN ISLANDS WILD TREES & SHRUBS

Cayman Islands Culturally Important Trees & Shrubs

## The Wash Woods, *Jacquinia* species Family: THEOPHRASTACEAE

Wash Wood has leathery, saporaceous leaves  
(having the qualities of soap).  
The wood is extremely hard.



Wash Wood (foreground) and Sea Grape, Little Salt Creek bluff, West Bay.

Wash Wood *Jacquinia keyensis* (above) has fragrant, creamy-white flowers and stiff, leathery leaves, slightly rolled under at the edges; **the fruits are orange when ripe**. It grows on Grand Cayman, Jamaica, Cuba, the Bahamas and Florida (where it is listed as threatened). It's called Joewood in Florida and the Bahamas, (both the scientific and common names are in honour of the Austrian botanist, Nicholas Joseph Jacquin). In Cayman the leaves and bark were traditionally used to make foam for washing clothes, hence its Cayman common name. It is extremely slow-growing and salt-tolerant; it cannot be transplanted. It grows in sand, in marl and on ironshore in the **West Bay** area on Grand Cayman and can be seen on **West Bay Beach**, just south of Sundowner, and in the **Barkers National Park**. It also grows on the **ironshore** south of Morgan's Harbour.

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Wash Wood *Jacquinia proctorii* has little yellow flowers, which turn brown as they age & the fruits are yellowish-green. It **only** grows in Jamaica and on all three Cayman Islands



Wash Wood on Cayman Brac