

LOASACEAE

by

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Herbs or shrubs, often provided with hooked, viscid, or stinging hairs. Leaves alternate or opposite, entire, lobed, or pinnatifid. Stipules wanting. Flowers hermaphrodite, actinomorphic, solitary or in cymes, yellow, rarely white or red; peduncles often opposite the leaves. Sepals 5 (or 4—7), persistent, imbricate. Petals as many as the sepals. Stamens numerous, in epipetalous clusters, or rarely 2—5. Staminodes alternating with the petals or wanting. Ovary inferior, 1- (or 2—3) celled; style entire or 2—3-cleft; stigma pointed or capitate. Ovules many, on 3—7 parietal placentas or only one ovule attached at the top of the ovary, anatropous. Fruit a capsule, 1—3-celled, opening by 3—7 valves at the apex or with longitudinal dehiscence. Seeds various in form and size. Endosperm present or wanting. Embryo straight or curved.

About 250 species in 15 genera, mainly in tropical and subtropical America; only one genus in Africa.

Mentzelia Linnaeus, Spec. Plant. 516. 1753

Erect or twining herbs; the hairs not stinging. Leaves alternate or rarely opposite. Inflorescence consisting of terminal cymes or the flowers solitary. Flowers 5-merous, yellow or white. Receptacle cylindrical or club-shaped. Petals convolute in the bud, free or connate at the base, deciduous. Stamens numerous, the outer ones often sterile and becoming petaloid. Ovary 1-celled; style filiform, with more or less indistinct longitudinal stigmatic striae. Ovules numerous, on 3—5 parietal placentas. Fruit cylindrical or club-shaped, opening by 3—7 apical valves. Seeds many, angular, flattened, sometimes winged, smooth or rough. Embryo straight. Endosperm copious or scanty.

About 50 species in tropical and subtropical America.

Mentzelia aspera L.

LINNAEUS, Spec. Plant. 516. 1753; GRISEBACH, Fl. Br. W. Ind. Isl. 298. 1860; URBAN, Symb. Ant. 4: 428. 1910; BOLDINGH, Fl. Ned. W. Ind. Eil. 294. 1913; Fl. D. W. Ind. Isl. 2: 70. 1914; URBAN, Symb. Ant. 8: 457. 1920; BRITTON & WILSON, Sci. Surv. Porto

Rico & Virgin Isl. 5: 607. 1924; FAWCETT & RENDLE, Fl. Jamaica 5(3): 247, fig. 95. 1926; ARNOLDO, Zakflora 147. 1954; Zakflora 151. 1964.

A branched, pubescent, annual herb, up to 1 m high; stems terete or striate, slender and densely covered with hairs. Leaves alternate, petiolate; petiole up to 5 cm long; blade triangular-ovate or ovate to lanceolate, serrate or deeply cut to semi 3-lobed, acute or acuminate at the apex and the top of the lobes, narrowed or subtruncate at the base, up to 9×6 cm, rough with hairs on both sides. Flowers yellow. Sepals linear-lanceolate, about 6 mm long. Petals oval, mucronate, about 8 mm long. Stamens 20—30, all fertile; filaments united with the petals, the inner ones filiform, the outer ones flattened, 4—5 mm long; anthers introrse, 0.5 mm long. Style about 4 mm long. Capsule cylindrical, narrowing towards the base, sessile, up to 2 cm long, very rough with barbed hairs. Seeds 6—9, wingless.

Continental tropical America, Greater Antilles, and the islands off the Venezuelan coast. Common weed.

Vernacular names: Amor falsu, dal pega, mora, pega pega, pechi pechi, pega saya shimarón (Leeward Group).

ARUBA: Miralamar (Stoffers 2210, fl. & fr. Feb.); along the road near Noord (Stoffers 1533, fl. & fr. Jan.; 1570, fr. Jan.); Oranjestad (Stoffers 2144, fl. & fr. Feb.); along roads near Oranjestad (Stoffers 2061, fl. & fr. Feb.); San Nicolas (Stoffers 1923, fl. & fr. Jan.); Seroe Largo (Stoffers 1869, fl. & fr. Jan.); Seroe Pretoe (Stoffers 1663, fl. & fr. Jan.); north-east of Jamanota (Stoffers 1646, fl. Jan.); Companashi (Arnoldo 87, fl. Dec.).

CURAÇAO: Seroe Christoffel (Stoffers 1202, fl. Dec.; Arnoldo 1834, fl. Feb.); hofje of Knip (Boldingh 5542, st. Nov.; 5538, fl. Nov.); hofje Van Engelen (Boldingh 5432, fl. Nov.); calcareous hills north of road from Westpunt to Savonet (Boldingh 4957, fl. Nov.); Gasparito (Lens 840, fl. Jan.); near Willemstad (Britton & Shafer 2914, fl. March); road near Anthonieberg (Boldingh 5140, st. Nov.); without loc. (Boldingh 4802, fl. Nov.; Aschenberg s.n., fl.).