

CASUARINACEAE

by

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Mostly monoecious trees or shrubs, often of "weeping" habit, with numerous slender, jointed, angular, and striate branches. Leaves reduced to minute scales or toothed sheaths. Flowers small, unisexual, with or without perianth. Male flowers in spike-like inflorescences, born in whorls within successive sheaths towards the branch-tips; each flower with one stamen, 2 perianth leaves and 2 bracteoles (often interpreted as 4 bracteoles). Female flowers in lateral, dense, spherical heads; each flower in the axil of a bract, without a perianth, but protected by 2 bracteoles; ovary superior, uni-ocular; style short, with 2 long stigmas which hang out beyond the bracts; ovules 2, collateral on a single, parietal placenta. After fertilization the female inflorescence becomes cone-like, the woody bracts subtending winged achenes. Seeds without endosperm.

One genus indigenous in the southern hemisphere. 40—50 species, mostly in Australia.

Casuarina Adanson, Fam. 2: 481. 1763

Characters as for the family.

Casuarina equisetifolia J. R. & G. Forst.
ssp. *equisetifolia*

J. R. & G. FORSTER, Charact. Gen. Plant. 104. 1776; GRISEBACH, Fl. Br. W. Ind. Isl. 177. 1859; Duss, Fl. phan. Ant. franç. 190. 1897; URBAN, Symb. Ant. 4: 184. 1903; BOLDINGH, Fl. D.W. Ind. Isl. 1: 44. 1909; Fl. Ned. W. Ind. Eil. 160. 1913; BRITTON & MILLSPAUGH, Bahama Fl. 100. 1920; URBAN, Symb. Ant. 8: 753. 1921; BRITTON & WILSON, Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virgin Isl. 5: 219. 1924; LEON & ALAIN, Fl. Cuba 2: 11. 1951; ARNOLDO, Gekw. en nutt. pl. Ned. Ant. 40, fig. 58. 1954; Gekw. en nutt. pl. Ned. Ant. 126, fig. 58. 1971; GOODING *et al.*, Fl. Barbados 115. 1965; ADAMS, Flowering plants of Jamaica 202. 1972.

A quick growing tree, up to 30 m tall but in our area usually much smaller, with slender trunk and darkbrown, furrowed bark; the ultimate twigs 20—25 cm

long, wiry, drooping and dark green, consisting of 30—35 segments with 6—8 whorled, appressed scale leaves at each node; the leaves 1—3 mm long, acute, ciliate, decurrent on the twigs. Male flowers minute, crowded in rings among the greyish scales, in 1—4 cm long inflorescences; stamens brownish. Female flowers in ball-like clusters of c. 5 mm diam., with exerted dark-red styles. The fruits crowded into a woody cone of bracts, 12—22 mm in diam., in which the paired bracteoles have become indurated and open like a capsule to expose a samaroid indehiscent 1-seeded nut.

Native of Australia; planted throughout the West Indies and there more or less naturalized.

Planted along the sandy beach coasts and along roadsides; also cultivated as an ornamental. Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius, and St. Martin.

ARUBA: Playa (Arnoldo 347, st. Dec.); Lago Golflinks (Arnoldo 2180, fl. & fr. Ap.).

SABA: The Bottom (Arnoldo 724, fr. Aug.; Boldingh 2298, st. July).