

SYMPLOCACEAE

by

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Trees or shrubs. Leaves alternate, simple. Stipules wanting. Inflorescence consisting of lateral or axillary racemes, spikes or clusters. Flowers hermaphrodite or rarely unisexual and then polygamous, actinomorphic. Calyx 5-lobed, imbricate, persistent, the tube partly or completely adnate to the ovary. Corolla often divided nearly to the base, 5—10-lobed, imbricate. Stamens numerous, in 1—3 series; filaments usually slightly united in clusters at the base of each corolla segment; anthers 2-celled, globose, with longitudinal dehiscence, innate. Ovary inferior to half-inferior, 2—5-locular; style 1, slender; stigma more or less capitate. Ovules commonly 2 in each locule, pendulous, anatropous, on an axile placenta. Fruit a drupe or berry, usually 1-seeded. Embryo straight. Endosperm fleshy.

About 280 species in only one genus in tropical regions, especially in south-east and east Asia and the Malayan region.

Symplocos Jacquin, Enum. Plant. Carib. 5. 1760

Characters and distribution as the family.

Symplocos martinicensis Jacq.

JACQUIN, Enum. Syst. Plant. Carib. 24. 1760; GRISEBACH, Fl. Br. W. Ind. Isl. 403. 1864; DUSS, Fl. phan. Ant. franç. 389. 1897; BOLDINGH, Fl. D.W. Ind. Isl. 1: 153. 1909; URBAN, Symb. Ant. 4: 486. 1910; BOLDINGH, Fl. Ned. W. Ind. Eil. 316. 1913; BRITTON & WILSON, Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virgin Isl. 6: 75. 1924; CHEESMAN, in Fl. Trinidad & Tobago 2: 141. 1947; ADAMS, Flowering plants of Jamaica 577. 1972; FOURNET, Fl. Guadeloupe & Martinique 1441, fig. 683. 1978.

Tree, up to 12 m tall, or shrub; young twigs glabrous or puberulent. Leaves alternate, petiolate; petioles stout, 0.5—1.5 cm long; blades elliptic to obovate, acuminate with obtuse tip at the apex, cuneate at the base, 4—13 × 2—6 cm,

chartaceous, glabrous or slightly pubescent beneath when young, shining above, margin conspicuously crenate-dentate. Inflorescence consisting of few- to several-flowered, compact clusters. Bracts ovate, 2×1 mm, fringed at the margin; bracteoles 2, ovate, $1-1.2 \times 0.5-0.6$ mm, fringed at the margin. Corolla white, 8—15 mm long, deeply lobed; tube and lobes about equal in length; lobes oblong or obovate-oblong, rounded at the apex. Stamens numerous; filaments united with the corolla tube, the free upper parts ligulate, 3—4 mm long; anthers small. Ovary 3—5-locular; style slender, 8—12 mm long; stigma capitate, 5-lobed. Fruit a nearly dry drupe, oblong, 8—13 mm long, bluish-black. Seeds usually 1, about 1.5 cm long.

Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Lesser Antilles.

In rainforest.

Vernacular name: blue berry (Windward Group).

SABA: slope of The Mountain near Windwardside, 600 m (Boldingh 2185, fr. July; 2152, fr. July); id. 400—475 m (Stoffers 3343, fl. & fr. May); gut near The Bottom (Boldingh 1424A, st. July).

St. EUSTATIUS: top of The Quill, 400 m (Boldingh 297, fl. June); id. 500 m (Boldingh 474, fl. June [L, U]); Cliff Raders Ravine? (Suringar s.n., fl. [L]).