

GENTIANACEAE

by

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Herbs, sometimes saprophytic. Leaves opposite, simple, often connate at the base. Flowers actinomorphic, bisexual, bracteate and bracteolate, arranged in cymose inflorescences or flowers solitary and terminal. Calyx 4—5-merous, tubular, often with discoid scales at the inner base. Corolla 4—5-merous, tubular, salver-shaped, the lobes contorted in bud. Stamens implanted in the corolla-tube, as many as the corolla-lobes, episepalous, anthers with distinct filaments or sessile, 2-celled, introrse, longitudinally dehiscent. Ovary superior, unilocular, with 2 intruded parietal placentas, ovules ∞ , anatropous. Style simple, stigma 2-lobed to capitate. Fruit a longitudinally dehiscent capsule, seeds ∞ , small, with a small embryo, endosperm fleshy.

About 800 species in 70 genera, all over the world.

Key to the genera:

1. Green herbs with well-developed leaves; inflorescence cymose, repeatedly branched; flowers pink *Centaurium*
Saprophytic plants, lacking chlorophyll; leaves small, scale-like; flowers solitary, terminal, yellow *Voyria*

Centaurium Hill, Brit. Herbal 62. 1756

Small herbs. Flowers arranged in dichasial to monochasial cymes, 4—5-merous. Calyx green, with a short tube, deeply divided into 5 keeled lobes. Corolla-tube about as long as the calyx. Stamens inserted in the upper part of the corolla-tube, with distinct filaments, anthers not coherent, helically coiled at anthesis. Ovary with a short, filiform style and a capitate to 2-lobed stigma. Fruit a capsule, seeds ∞ , pyramidal to oblate (according to Broome).

40—50 cosmopolites, excluded in tropical and S. Africa.

***Centaurium quitense* (Kunth) B. L. Robinson**

B. L. ROBINSON, Proc. Amer. Acad. Arts 45: 397. 1910; BROOME, Brittonia 28: 416. 1976; — *Erythraea quitense* KUNTH, in H.B.K., Nov. Gen. & Spec. 3: 178. 1818; — *Centaurium pulchellum* auct. non DRUCE; ARNOLDO, Zakflora 114. 1954; Zakflora 147. 1964.

Herb, 10—20 cm high, dichotomously branched from near the base. Stems 4-ridged. Basal rosette of leaves lacking. Leaves ovate-triangular to narrowly ovate-triangular, 5—15 mm long, 2—6 mm wide. Inflorescence a lax, repeatedly branched, dichasial to monochasial cyme. Pedicels of central flower in dichasium 5—20 mm long, to 30 mm in fruit. Calyx ca. 5 mm long, lobes subulate, ca. 3.5 mm long. Corolla pink, 8—12 mm long, tube 5—7 mm long, slightly constricted above the ovary, lobes triangular-ovate, 4—5 mm long. Stamens inserted near top of ovary. Capsule fusiform, 5—8 mm long, to 2 mm wide.

Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, and N. and W. South America.

CURAÇAO. Piedra Moelina, St. Christoffelberg (Arnoldo 1604, fl. April).

***Voyria* Aublet, Hist. Pl. Gui. Franç. 1: 208. 1775**

Small, saprophytic herbs. Stems erect, usually simple. Leaves small, scale-like, somewhat connate at the base, the lower ones sometimes alternate. Flowers terminal, solitary (in this region). Calyx tubular to campanulate, sometimes with discoid scales at the inner base. Corolla far exceeding the calyx. Stamens subsessile, often coherent. Ovary with a short filiform style and a capitate-peltate stigma. Capsule septicidal, dehiscing in the middle only, seeds globose, or sometimes with hair-like wings (in this region).

Twenty species, of which 19 in the Neotropics and 1 in tropical West Africa.

***Voyria aphylla* (Jacq.) Pers.**

PERSOON, Synops. Pl. 1: 284. 1805; — *Gentiana aphylla* JACQUIN, Sel. Stirp. Am. Hist. 87. t. 60, fig. 3. 1763; — *Voyria uniflora* LAMARCK, Encycl. Meth. Bot. 1: 491. 1797 (as '*Vohiria*') (= *Gentiana aphylla*); GRISEBACH, Fl. Br. W. Ind. Isl. 425. 1864; DUSS, Fl. phan. Ant. franç. 402. 1897; — *Leiphaimos aphylla* (JACQ.) GILG in ENGLER & PRANTL, Nat. Pflanzenfam. 4(2): 104. 1895; BOLDINGH, Fl. D.W. Ind. Isl. 1: 155. 1909; URBAN, Symb. Ant. 4: 490. 1910; BOLDINGH, Fl. Ned. W. Ind. Eil. 318. 1913; BRITTON & WILSON, Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virg. Isl. 6: 84. 1926; WILLIAMS & CHEESMAN, Fl. Trinidad & Tobago 2: 180. 1947; LEON & ALAIN, Fl. Cuba 4: 168, fig. 75. 1957; ADAMS, Flowering plants of Jamaica 582. 1972; FOURNET, Fl. Guadeloupe & Martinique 1224, fig. 604. 1978.

Saprophytic herb, 15—30 cm high. Stems mostly simple, yellow. Leaves narrowly triangular to narrowly ovate, 4—8 mm long, apex acute. Flowers terminal, solitary, yellow. Calyx campanulate to cylindrical, 4—8 mm long, tubular part 3—6 mm long, lobes triangular, 1—2 mm long; inner base of calyx

covered with scales. Corolla yellow, salver-shaped, 25—40 mm long, tube cylindrical, 20—35 mm long, lobes narrowly ovate to narrowly obovate, 4—8 mm long, 1—3 mm wide. Stamens inserted 3—5 mm below the throat, subsessile, thecae tapering toward the base, rounded at the apex. Ovary stipitate to subsessile, fusiform, 5—8 mm long, ca. 1 mm in diam., stipe 0.5—3 mm long in fruit. Style filiform, stigma capitate-peltate. Capsule fusiform, 8—10 mm long, 1.5—2.5 mm in diam., septicidal, dehiscing in the middle; seeds with slender hair-like wings, ca. 1 mm long, 0.05 mm wide.

Widespread all over the Neotropics.

SABA: top of The Mountain, 800 m (Boldingh 1831, fl. July; Boldingh 2226, fl. July); top of The Mountain, 800-850 m (Stoffers 4201, fl. Aug.).

ST. EUSTATIUS: rim of the Quill (Arnoldo 2155, fl. March); top of the Quill, 400-450 m (Boldingh 296, fl. June; Boldingh 401, fl. June; Boldingh 365, fl. June).