

POLYGALACEAE

by

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Herbs, shrubs or trees, sometimes climbing. Leaves usually alternate, entire. Stipules wanting or stipular glands present. Inflorescence consisting of axillary or terminal spikes, cymes or panicles. Flowers hermaphrodite, irregular, subtended by a bract and 2 bracteoles. Sepals 5 (or 4—7), imbricate, persistent, free or the 2 lower united, the 2 inner sepals largest, often winged or petaloid. Petals usually 3 (or 5), the lower median petal ("keel") often concave, enclosing stamens and ovary, with or without a fringing crest, two petals as long as the keel and two wanting, very small or scale-like. Stamens usually 8; filaments united into a splitted sheath and adhering more or less to the petals; anthers basifixed, 1-celled, opening by a terminal or subterminal pore. Disk sometimes present. Ovary superior, 2-locular; style 1; stigma often tufted. Ovules solitary in each locule, pendulous, anatropous with a ventral raphe. Fruit a loculicidal 2-locular capsule, or a nut, samara or drupe. Seeds solitary in each locule, often pubescent. Embryo straight. Endosperm present or wanting.

About 800 species in 13 genera in tropical and temperate regions.

Polygala Linnaeus, Spec. Plant. 701. 1753

Herbs, shrubs or trees. Inflorescence consisting of terminal, axillary or extra-axillary racemes. Flowers usually purplish. Sepals unequal, the two inner ones petaloid, deciduous or persistent, the three outer ones herbaceous, free or the lower ones united, persistent or deciduous. Petals 3, the lower one boat-shaped ("keel"), sometimes 3-lobed, unappendaged, beaked or crested; the two upper petals united to the keel at the base, the 2 lateral ones wanting. Stamens 6—8; filaments united into a sheathing tube, split on the upper side, adnate to keel and upper petals. Fruit a membranaceous capsule, compressed, dehiscent along the margin. Seeds ellipsoid or obovoid to fusiform. Aril variable.

Nearly 600 species, natives of all tropical and temperate regions.

Polygala monticola Kunth

KUNTH in HUMBOLDT, BONPLAND & KUNTH, Nov. Gen. & Spec. 5: 405. 1823 ed. quart.

Erect, annual herb. Leaves alternate, linear to lanceolate or narrowly ovate. Inflorescence consisting of terminal or supra-axillary, loosely-flowered racemes; bracts and bracteoles subulate, small. Exterior sepals unequal, inferior ones smaller, almost entirely connate. Wings inequilateral, obovate to obovate-orbicular, persistent on the fruit. Keel without crest. Stamens 8; filaments united for more than half their length, 3—3.5 mm long; anthers 0.7 mm long. Ovary oblong; style slender, elongate, bent above the middle, puberulous near the top; stigma shortly 2-lobed. Capsule elliptic-oblong, notched at the apex, 3 × 1.5 mm. Seeds cylindrical, densely puberulous to silky-pilose, 2.5 mm long. Aril crest-like at the top of the seed, with 2 short appendages.

Widely distributed from Mexico southward in tropical America.

var. *bryzoides* (St. Hil.) Steyerl.

STEYERMARK, *Feldiana Bot.* 28: 300. 1952; — *Polygala angustifolia* KUNTH, in H.B.K., *Nov. Gen. & Spec.* 5: 405. 1823, ed. quart.; Duss, *Fl. phan. Ant. franç.* 18. 1897; BOLDINGH, *Fl. Ned. W. Ind. Eil.* 240. 1913; *Fl. D.W. Ind. Isl.* 2: 50. 1914; FAWCETT & RENDLE, *Fl. Jamaica* 4(2): 243. 1920; ADAMS, *Flowering plants of Jamaica* 402. 1972; — *Polygala angustifolia* KUNTH var. *latifolia* St. HILAIRE ex CHODAT, *Mém. Soc. Phys. et Hist. Nat. Genève* 31, 2 no. 2.: 53. 1893; — *Polygala brizoides* St. HILAIRE, *Fl. Bras. Mer.* 2: 44, t. 88. 1829; BRITTON & WILSON, *Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virgin Isl.* 5: 468. 1924; LEON & ALAIN, *Fl. Cuba* 3: 32. 1953; ARNOLDO, *Zakflora* 143. 1954; *Zakflora* 177. 1964.

Erect herb up to 30 cm high; stems simple or branched, more or less pubescent to substrigose. Leaves linear-lanceolate to narrowly ovate, acute or acuminate at the apex, cuneate at the base, 1.5—5.5 cm long and 2—12 mm wide, midvein prominent, lateral veins 3—6 pairs or obsolete, subglabrous to sparsely pubescent; petioles 1—1.5 mm long. Inferior sepals glandular-ciliate by stalked glands near the apex. Wings obovate-elliptic, 3—4 × 2.5—3 mm, pinkish-purple. Keel obtuse, about as long as the wings, basally attached to the stamen-tube. Petals suborbicular-obovate, wedge-shaped at the base and retuse at the apex, nearly 4 mm long, mauve-purplish.

Tropical America from Mexico southward; on many islands of the West Indies.

A sparse herb to be found in various types of vegetation.

Vernacular name: olefanti (Leeward Group).

ARUBA: Rooi Taki (Arnoldo 230, fl. Dec.); slope of Miralamar (Boldingh 6453, fl. Jan.).

BONAIRE: Soebi Blancoe (Arnoldo 376, fl. & fr. Jan.); neighbourhood of Rincón (Boldingh 7025, fl. & fr. Feb.); along road from Fontein to Seroe Grandi (Boldingh 7348, fl. & fr. Feb.).

CURAÇAO: Hofje of Barber (Boldingh 5209, fl. & fr. Nov.); hills near Santa Cruz (Boldingh 5599, fl. & fr. Nov.); fields near Willemstad (Britton & Shafer 2917, fl. & fr. March); hills near Knip (Arnoldo 2160, fl. & fr. Jan.).