

7. POLYCARPAEA Lamarck, J. Hist. Nat. 2: 3, 5. 1792, nom. cons.

白鼓钉属 bai gu ding shu

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Polia Loureiro, nom. rej.

Herbs or subshrubs, annual or perennial. Stems erect or diffuse. Leaves opposite or falsely verticillate with axillary clusters of leaves, sessile or petiolate; leaf blade linear to obovate; stipules membranous or hyaline. Inflorescence a cyme, terminal. Flowers numerous, 5-merous. Sepals hyaline, midvein not raised. Petals usually small, entire or 2-lobed. Stamens (2–)5. Ovary 1-loculed with few to many ovules; style undivided at apex. Fruit a capsule, 3-valved, few to several seeded. Seeds reniform, slightly flat.

About 50 species: mostly in the Old World tropics and subtropics, a few in the New World tropics; two species in China.

1a. Leaves linear or acicular, ca. 1 mm wide, longer than internodes at least near base, erect or recurved; sepals

2–3 mm; style short, 1/3–1/2 as long as ovary 1. *P. corymbosa*

1b. Leaves narrowly oblong to oblong, 1–3.5 mm wide, shorter than internodes, often mostly sharply reflexed

at base; sepals ca. 4 mm; style 1–2 × as long as ovary 2. *P. gaudichaudii*

1. *Polycarpaea corymbosa* (Linnaeus) Lamarck, Tab. Encycl. 2: 129. 1797.

白鼓钉 bai gu ding

Achyranthes corymbosa Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 205. 1753.

Herbs annual or short-lived perennial. Stems erect, 15–35 cm tall, mostly branching above middle, occasionally branched at base, white pilose. Stipules ovate-lanceolate, 2–4 mm, scarious, margin hyaline, apex acute. Leaves apparently verticillate; leaf blade linear or acicular, 1.5–2 cm × ca. 1 mm, erect or uniformly recurved from erect base, apex acute to needlelike. Bracts lanceolate, longer than pedicel, hyaline, membranous. Pedicel slender, white pilose. Sepals lanceolate, (2–)2.7–3.5 × 0.5–1 mm, membranous, hyaline, apex acuminate. Petals milky white or reddish, broadly ovate, ca. 1/2 as long as sepals, apex obtuse. Stamens usually 5, shorter than petals. Style short, 1/3–1/2 as long as ovary. Capsule brown, ovoid, ca. 1/2 as long as calyx, 5–13-seeded. Seed brown, flat, ca. 0.5 × 0.3 mm, obscurely reticulate. Fl. Jul–Aug, fr. Sep–Oct.

Mostly on open, often moist, sandy soils, less often in grassy places on mountain slopes; sea level to 1200 m. Anhui, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Hubei, Jiangxi, Taiwan, Yunnan [widespread throughout tropics and subtropics, most variable and probably originating in Africa].

This species is used medicinally.

2. *Polycarpaea gaudichaudii* Gagnepain, Bull. Soc. Bot. France 56: 37. 1909.

大花白鼓钉 da hua bai gu ding

Herbs or subshrubs, perennial. Rootstock slightly woody. Stems branching near base, ascending, 20–30 cm, pilose. Stipules white, long triangular, 1.5–2 mm, scarious. Leaves opposite or apparently verticillate; leaf blade narrowly oblong to oblong-elliptic, 5–20 × 1–3.5

mm, distinctly shorter than internode, glabrous, mostly sharply reflexed from base, apex obtuse, mucronate. Cymes rather lax; bracts scarious. Pedicel mostly short, to 5 mm in fruit, with sparse long hairs. Flowers ca. 4 mm. Sepals white, with thick brown veins near base, ovate, ca. 3 × 1.5 mm, apex acuminate. Petals white, with purple-brown veins, longer than sepals. Stamens usually 5, subequalling sepals. Style filiform, 1–2 × as long as ovary. Capsule brown, ovoid, ca. 3 mm, glossy. Seed brown, ca. 0.7 × 0.3 mm. Fl. May–Jul, fr. Aug–Oct.

Most records from coastal sands, also recorded from grasslands on mountain slopes. Guangdong, Hainan [Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Vietnam].

The collections from Hainan are very uniform, with distinctively reflexed leaves and well-developed, brown veins at the bases of the sepals. Material from Vietnam is more variable, rarely showing the reflexed leaves and with more indistinct sepal venation, and is difficult to separate from the rather variable *Polycarpaea arenaria* (Loureiro) Gagnepain.

