3. ARUNCUS Linnaeus, Opera Var. 259. 1758.

假升麻属  jia sheng ma shu

Gu Cuizhi (谷粹芝  Ku Tsue-chih); Crinan Alexander

Herbs perennial, sometimes woody at base, monoecious. Rhizome robust. Stems erect, angled. Leaves exstipulate, 1–3-pinnate, rarely 3-foliolate; leaflets sharply doubly serrate. Inflorescence a large, spikelike, many-flowered panicle; peduncle and pedicels pubescent and sparsely stellate hairy; bracts and bracteoles linear-lanceolate. Flowers sessile or subsessile, unisexual, rarely bisexual. Hypanthium cupular, with ringlike disk on rim. Sepals (4 or)5(or 6), persistent in fruit, triangular, abaxially glabrous or nearly so, margin entire, apex acute. Petals 5, white, obovate, base cuneate, apex obtuse. Male flowers: stamens 15–30, borne on rim of hypanthium; filaments slender, longer than petals; carpels obsolete. Female flowers: filaments short; anthers sterile; carpels 3 or 4(–8). Follicles glabrous, pendulous in fruit, dehiscent along adaxial suture. Seeds 2.

Three to six poorly defined species: N temperate zone; two species (one endemic) in China.

1a. Plants to 3 m tall; leaves 2- or 3-pinnate, leaflets rhombic-ovate, ovate-lanceolate, or long elliptic, apex acuminate or long acuminate; panicle lax, 10–40 cm .................................................. 1. A. sylvester

1b. Plants to 0.7 m tall; leaves 1- or 2-pinnate or 1- or 2-ternate, leaflets suborbicular or broadly ovate, rarely rhombic-ovate, apex rounded, obtuse, or acute; panicle dense, 5–25 cm .............................................. 2. A. gombalanus


贡山假升麻  gong shan jia sheng ma

Aruncus sylvester (Kosteletzky ex Maximowicz) Fernald var. kamtschaticus (Maximowicz) H. Hara.

Plants to 3 m tall, woody at base. Stems dark purplish, glabrous. Leaves 2- or 3-pinnate; petiolules 4–10 mm; leaflets rhombic-ovate, ovate-lanceolate, or long elliptic, 5–13 × 2–8 cm, subglabrous on both surfaces, base cuneate, margin irregularly toothed, apex acuminate to long acuminate. Panicle lax, 10–40 × 7–17 cm; peduncle and pedicels glabrescent in fruit; bracts and bracteoles sparsely pubescent. Flowers 2–4 in diam.; pedicel ca. 2 mm. Hypanthium sparsely pubescent. Sepals spreading or erect in fruit. Male flowers with filaments 2–4 as long as petals. Fl. Jun, fr. Aug–Sep.

Mixed forests on montane slopes, valleys; 1800–3500 m. Anhui, Gansu, Guangxi, Heilongjiang, Henan, Hunan, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Xizang, Yunnan [Bhutan, NW India (Himachal Pradesh), Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Russia, Sikkim, SW Asia, Europe, NW North America (Alaska)].


Grassy slopes on mountain summits; 3000–4000 m. E Xizang, NW Yunnan.