

### 83. *CENTROSEMA* (Candolle) Benth. *Centrosema* Gen. 53. 1837, nom. cons.

距瓣豆属 *ju ban dou shu*

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*Clitoria* sect. *Centrosema* Candolle, *Prodr.* 2: 234. 1825.

Shrubs or herbs, procumbent or climbing. Leaves pinnately 3(–7)-foliolate; stipules striate, basifixed, persistent; stipels small. Inflorescence axillary, clustered to racemose, 1- to many flowered; bracts similar in shape to stipules; bracteoles 2, adnate to calyx, persistent, striate, larger than bracts. Calyx shortly campanulate, 5-lobed; lobes unequal. Corolla white, purple, red, or blue, longer than calyx; standard ± circular, abaxially hairy, base clawed, with short abaxial spur above claw. Stamens diadelphous; vexillary stamen free; anthers uniform. Ovary sessile; ovules many; style compressed, spatulate at apex, pubescent or bearded at apex; stigma terminal. Legume linear, dehiscent, compressed, filled between seeds. Seeds to 20, oblong or globose; hilum linear to narrowly elliptic; strophiole small or absent.

About 45 species: worldwide but mostly in the New World; one (or possibly two) species (introduced) in China.

**1. *Centrosema pubescens*** Benth. *Centrosema* Gen. 55. 1837.

距瓣豆 *ju ban dou*

*Bradburya pubescens* (Benth.) Kuntze; *B. schiedeana* (Schlechtendal) Rose; *Centrosema ferrugineum* A. Richard; *C. intermedium* A. Richard; *C. molle* Martius ex Benth.; *C. salzmannii* Benth.; *C. schiedeana* (Schlechtendal) R. J. Williams & R. J. Clements; *Clitoria schiedeana* Schlechtendal; *Ternatea schiedeana* (Schlechtendal) Kuntze.

Herbs, perennial. Stems twining or trailing, sometimes rooting at nodes, slender, villous. Leaves pinnately 3-foliolate; stipules ovate to ovate-lanceolate, 2–3 mm, with longitudinal striations, persistent; petiole 2.5–6 cm; stipels small, setiform; petiolules short, 1–2 mm, terminal one longer; leaflets thinly papery, terminal leaflet elliptic, oblong, or subovate, 2.6–10 × 1.5–6.8 cm, sparsely villous on both surfaces, lateral veins 5–7 on each side, slender, merging near margin, base obtuse or rounded, apex acute; lateral leaflets slightly small, slightly oblique. Raceme with 2–4 flowers near apex; peduncle 2.5–7 cm; bracts similar to stipules in shape; bracteoles broadly ovate to broadly elliptic, obviously striate, adpressed to calyx, larger than bracts. Calyx 5-lobed; upper 2 lobes ± connate, lowest longest, linear. Corolla white, pink, or light purple, 2–3 cm; standard broadly orbicular, densely villous abaxially, with short spur near base; wings falcate-obovate, one side with curved auricle, almost semicircular, each petal shortly clawed. Legume linear, 7–13 × 0.5–0.6 cm, compressed, apex acuminate, beak straight, slender, 8–15 mm; valves convex to ridge from both sutures, twisting at dehiscence. Seeds 7–15, brownish black or yellowish green with dark mottling, oblong, 4–5 mm; hilum short. Fl. Nov–Apr, fr. Jan–Jul. *2n* = 22.

Introduced forage plant; near sea level to 100 m. Guangdong, Hainan, Jiangsu, Taiwan, Yunnan [native to Central America (extending to 22° N in Mexico) and South America (Colombia)].

Fantz (*Sida* 17: 321–332. 1996) showed that the material widely used for herbage and as a green fertilizer by agronomists under the name *Centrosema pubescens* belongs to two distinct species: the majority to *C. molle* and the remainder to *C. pubescens* sensu stricto. However, because the identity of the available Chinese material is not clear,

the name *C. pubescens* is used here in its old, inclusive sense. Wiersma and Kirkbride (*Taxon* 54: 209–210. 2005) proposed conservation of the name *C. pubescens* with a conserved type. If this proposal is successful, the correct name for the taxon currently known as *C. pubescens* sensu stricto will be *C. schiedeana*, and that for *C. molle* will be *C. pubescens*. There is ongoing debate on the desirability of such a change, and it is possible that the name *C. pubescens* might instead be rejected to avoid confusion resulting from a change in its correct usage, in which case the name *C. schiedeana* would again be correct, while *C. molle* would remain in use. The two species may be distinguished as follows: *C. molle*: bracts 4–6 × 1–2 mm, puberulous; pedicels 6–9 mm at anthesis; bracteoles 6–9 × 4–6 mm; seeds brownish black; *C. pubescens*: bracts 6–9 × 3–6 mm, sericeous; pedicels 3–6 mm at anthesis; bracteoles 10–16 × 6–9 mm; seeds yellowish green.

