22. PARKINSONIA Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 375. 1753.

扁轴木属 bian zhou mu shu

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Shrubs or trees, prickly or not. Leaves abruptly bipinnate; rachis very flattened; pinnae usually 2–4, appearing congested at first sight; stipules small, scaly to spinescent; rachis of pinnae very long and flattened; leaflets reduced, inconspicuous, numerous, opposite or alternate, small. Racemes or cymes axillary; bracts caducous, small. Pedicels long, without bracteoles. Flowers bisexual. Receptacle discoid. Sepals 5, slightly unequal, imbricate or subvalvate, membranous. Petals 5, spreading, slightly unequal, shortly clawed, uppermost broader and long clawed. Stamens 10, free, not exserted; filaments villous at bases; anthers ovoid, versatile, cells opening by lateral slits. Ovary shortly stalked, inserted at bottom of receptacle, glabrous to ± pubescent, many ovuled; style filiform, glabrous or pubescent; stigma truncate, ciliate or glabrous. Legume linear, torulose, not winged, indehiscent, thinly leathery. Seeds oblong; hilum small, near apex, with endosperm; cotyledons flat, fleshy; radicle straight.

About four species: mostly in dry regions of S Africa, tropical America, and Oceania; one species (introduced) in China.

1. Parkinsonia aculeata Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 375. 1753.

扁轴木 bian zhou mu

Shrubs or trees, to 6 m tall, prickly, with smooth, green bark. Leaf rachis and stipules becoming spines; pinnae 1–3 pairs, clustered at spinescent, very short rachis of leaves; rachis of pinnae green, to 40 cm; leaflets obovate-elliptic to obovate-oblong or oblong, 2.5–8.5 × 1–3.5 mm. Racemes sparsely flowered. Flowers yellow; pedicels 1.5–1.7 cm; bracts lanceolate. Sepals oblong, ca. 6 mm, apex obtuse. Petals spatulate, apex rounded, uppermost longer, ca. 11 × 6 mm. Filaments villous at base. Legume 7.5–10.5 cm.

Cultivated in Hainan [native to tropical America; widely cultivated in tropical regions of the world].