

51. CODIAEUM Rumphius ex A. Jussieu, Euphorb. Gen. 33. 1824, nom. cons.

变叶木属 *bian ye mu shu*

Li Bingtao (李秉滔 *Li Ping-tao*); Michael G. Gilbert

Shrubs or treelets, monoecious, rarely dioecious; indumentum when present simple; latex present, clear and nontoxic. Leaves alternate, petiolate; stipules minute, caducous, sometimes obsolete; leaf blade entire, rarely lobed; venation pinnate. Inflorescence axillary, long, unbranched, usually unisexual. Male flowers several per bract; calyx (3–)5(–6)-lobed, lobes imbricate; petals small, 5 or 6, rarely absent; disk divided into 5–15 free glands; stamens 15–100; rudimentary ovary absent. Female flowers 1 per bract; calyx 5-lobed; petals absent; disk subtire or divided; ovary 3-locular; ovules 1 per locule; styles 3, unlobed, rarely bifid. Fruit a capsule. Seeds carunculate; cotyledons broad and flat.

About 15 species: from Indonesia and Philippines to New Guinea, tropical Australia, and Pacific islands; one species (introduced) in China.

1. *Codiaeum variegatum* (Linnaeus) Rumphius ex A. Jussieu, Euphorb. Gen. 80, 111. 1824.

变叶木 *bian ye mu*

Croton variegatus Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 2: 1199. 1753 [*“variegatum”*]; *Codiaeum variegatum* (Linnaeus) Blume; *C. variegatum* var. *pictum* (Loddiges) Müller Argoviensis; *Croton pictus* Loddiges.

Shrubs up to 3 m tall; branches glabrous, with prominent leaf scars. Petiole 0.2–2.5 cm; leaf blade very variable in shape and color, linear, linear-lanceolate, oblong, elliptic, lanceolate, ovate, spatulate, or fiddle-shaped to obovate, sometimes divided to midvein into upper and lower parts, 5–30 × (0.3–)0.5–8 cm, thinly leathery, green, purple-red, and/or yellow, sometimes

with colored spots or stripes of spots, base cuneate to obtuse, apex acute or acuminate to rounded. Inflorescences 8–30 cm. Male flowers white; pedicels delicate; petals 5, smaller than sepals; disk glands 5; stamens 20–30. Female flowers yellowish; pedicels slightly thickened; sepals ovate-triangular; disk annular; styles recurved, entire. Capsule subglobose, slightly flattened, glabrous, ca. 9 mm in diam. Seeds ca. 6 mm. Fl. Sep–Oct, fr. Nov–Dec.

Cultivated. Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Yunnan [native to Indonesia and Malaysia (peninsular) to Oceania; widely introduced].

Codiaeum variegatum is widely cultivated as a house plant for its very brightly colored foliage. The leaves are used as a medicine to disperse extravasated blood and as an anti-inflammatory.

Fl. China 11: 267–268. 2008.