

15. PENTAPETES Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 2: 698. 1753.

午时花属 wu shi hua shu

Annual herbs. Leaves alternate; leaf blade simple. Flowers axillary, solitary or paired; epicalyx lobes 3, acute, caducous. Calyx 5-lobed, divided almost to base. Petals 5, red. Stamens 15, in 5 groups of 3 alternating with staminodes, connate at base into tube; staminodes 5, nearly as long as petals; anther 2-celled, extrorse. Ovary sessile, 5-locular; ovules many per locule; style elongated. Capsule ovoid-globose, dehiscent into 5 mericarps. Seeds 8–12 per mericarp, in 2 rows, elliptic, with endosperm; cotyledons 2-divided, plicate.

One species: widespread in tropical Asia; introduced in China.

1. *Pentapetes phoenicea* Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 2: 698. 1753.

午时花 wu shi hua

Annual herbs, 0.5–1 m tall, sparsely stellate hairy. Petiole 1–2.5 cm; leaf blade linear-lanceolate, 5–10 × 1–2 cm, base broadly cuneate, rounded or truncate, margin crenate, apex acuminate. Flowers opening at noon, closing at dawn. Calyx lobes lanceolate, ca. 1 cm, abaxially stellate velutinous and hispid. Petals red, broadly ovate, ca. 12 mm. Staminodes tongue-shaped, 12–13 × ca. 1 mm. Ovary ovoid, villous; ovules 8–12 per cell; style filiform, glabrous, ca. 1 cm. Capsule nearly globose, ca. 1.2 cm in diam., densely stellate hairy and hispid, shorter than persistent calyx. Fl. summer–autumn.

Cultivated, requires moist conditions. Guangdong, Guangxi, Sichuan, S Yunnan [Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam; N Australia; naturalized in Central America].

Pentapetes phoenicea is a plant of tropical Asia that is cultivated for its bright red flowers. It has become naturalized in many areas such that the native distribution is now obscured.

