

4. EPIPHYLLUM Haworth, Syn. Pl. Succ. 197. 1812.

昙花属 tan hua shu

Phyllocactus Link, nom. illeg. superfl.

Plants mostly epiphytic. Old stems woody at base, often terete; branches usually flattened and leaflike, or 3-winged, with stout midrib, margins crenate, coarsely serrate, or lacerate, sometimes horny. Areoles seated between crenations of stem margins, woolly when young, setose in juvenile growth. Leaves and spines absent. Flowers nocturnal, borne in lateral areoles, solitary, sessile, funnellform or salverform, usually large. Receptacle tube elongate, with scattered scales. Perianth spreading to rotate; segments usually linear-lanceolate. Petaloids white; outer ones often recurved, sometimes cream or pinkish. Stamens numerous; filaments inserted in receptacle tube and perianth throat; anthers exserted. Placentas parietal; style elongate; stigmas numerous, exserted, linear. Fruit green, red, or purplish, globose to cylindric, usually fleshy, with low ridges bearing scales, usually splitting along one side when ripe. Seeds numerous, ovate-reniform; testa glossy black, minutely wrinkled or spotted.

About 13 species: tropical America; four species cultivated in China as ornamentals, of which one species occasionally escaped from cultivation in tropical areas.

1. *Epiphyllum oxypetalum* (Candolle) Haworth, Philos. Mag. Ann. Chem. 6: 109. 1829.

昙花 tan hua

Cereus oxypetalus Candolle, Prodr. 3: 470. 1828; *Phyllocactus oxypetalus* (Candolle) Link ex Walpers.

Shrubs epiphytic, freely branched, 2–6 m tall, with aerial roots. Old stems and basal extension shoots terete, to 2 m or more, woody; branches numerous, dark green, laterally flattened, leaflike, lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate, 15–100 × 5–12 cm, glabrous, base cuneate, attenuate, or stalked, margin undulate to deeply crenate, apex acute to acuminate; midrib 2–6 mm wide, stout. Areoles small, spineless. Flowers nocturnal, fragrant, funnellform, 25–30 × 10–27 cm. Receptacle tube 13–18

cm, base green, 4–9 mm in diam., slightly angled, with triangular to lanceolate scales 3–10 mm. Sepaloids often recurved, pale green or pinkish red, linear to oblanceolate. Petaloids white, oblanceolate to obovate, 7–10 × 3–4.5 cm. Filaments white, 2.5–5 mm; anthers cream, 3–3.5 mm. Style white, 20–22 cm; stigmas 15–20, cream, narrowly linear, 1.6–1.8 mm. Fruit rare, purplish red, oblong, ca. 16 × 5.7 cm. Seed 2–2.5 × ca. 1.5 mm. Fl. Jun–Oct.

Escaped from cultivation in tropical areas; 1000–1200 m. S Yunnan (Jinghong) [native to Mexico and Guatemala; widely introduced elsewhere as an ornamental].

This species was first introduced to China in 1645, and the naturalized plant was first recorded in Jinghong, Yunnan, in 1936. The mucilaginous flower is often eaten in a vegetable soup.

