

17. THEVETIA Linnaeus, Opera Var. 212. 1758, nom. cons.

黄花夹竹桃属 huang hua jia zhu tao shu

Cascabela Rafinesque; *Plumeriopsis* Rusby & Woodson.

Trees or much-branched shrubs, evergreen, erect, latex white. Leaves alternate, rather densely together on slender branchlets. Cymes terminal and leaf opposed. Calyx deeply divided, with many basal glands inside. Corolla yellow, funnelform, lobes overlapping to left, throat with 5, narrow, long-hairy scales. Stamens inserted in distal narrow part of corolla tube; filaments very short; anthers narrowly oblong, small, free from pistil head, cells not appendaged proximally; disc absent. Ovary 2-loculed, placenta prominent. Style filiform; pistil head disclike, thick, dilated, apex shortly 2-cleft. Drupes depressed globose; endocarp hard, woody or fleshy. Seeds 2 per locule, wingless, not comose, without endosperm; cotyledons suborbicular, fleshy, radicle short.

Eight species: tropical America, two species cultivated in China.

- 1a. Leaves narrowly obovate; corolla tube longer than lobes 1. *T. ahouai*
- 1b. Leaves very narrowly oblong; corolla tube shorter than lobes 2. *T. peruviana*

1. **Thevetia ahouai** (Linnaeus) A. de Candolle, Prodr. 8: 345. 1844.

阔叶竹桃 kuo ye zhu tao

Cerbera ahouai Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 208. 1753.

Shrubs to 3 m tall. Wood with an offensive smell. Leaf blade narrowly obovate, glabrous adaxially, pubescent abaxially, apex obtuse. Sepals ovate, reflexed, glabrous, apex acute. Corolla tube dilated distally, longer than lobes, closed at mouth, marked with 5 deep grooves; lobes oval, oblique or overlapping, with undulate margin; corona scales absent. Stamens inserted at apex of corolla tube, included. Style filiform; pistil head turbinate, apex 2-cleft. Fl. almost throughout the year.

S Guangdong [introduced from Brazil].

Cultivated for medicine. The sap and seeds are deadly poisonous to domestic animals.

Fl. May-Dec. $2n = 20$.

Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Taiwan, Yunnan [native to Central and South America].

Cultivated for medicine. The sap and seeds are deadly poisonous to domestic animals. The seeds yield oil for industry and soap making. The bark is a powerful antiperiodic and febrifuge. A handsome ornamental.

2. **Thevetia peruviana** (Persoon) K. Schumann in Engler & Prantl, Nat. Pflanzenfam. 4(2): 159. 1895.

黄花夹竹桃 huang hua jia zhu tao

Cerbera peruviana Persoon, Syn. Pl. 1: 267. 1805; *Cascabela thevetia* (Linnaeus) Lippold; *Cerbera thevetia* Linnaeus; *Thevetia linearis* A. de Candolle; *T. neriifolia* Jussieu ex Steudel; *T. neriifolia* Jussieu ex A. de Candolle; *T. thevetia* (Linnaeus) Millspaugh.

Trees to 6 m tall. Bark chocolate-brown, lenticellate; lower branches pendulous, young branches greenish gray. Petiole ca. 3 mm; leaf blades lustrous green adaxially, light green abaxially, very narrowly oblong, 10–15 × 0.5–1.2 cm, somewhat leathery, glabrous, apex acuminate, lateral veins obscure. Pedicel 2.5–5 cm. Flowers fragrant. Sepals green, narrowly triangular, apex acuminate. Corolla 6–7 × 4.5–5.5 cm; tube 4–5 cm, shorter than lobes; corona scales present, connected by a transverse row of long white hairs, lobes obliquely obovate. Drupes compressed triangular-globose, 2.5–4 cm in diam. Seeds light gray, lenticular, ca. 2 × 3.5 cm.

