

17. **PERSEA** Miller, Gard. Dict. Abr., ed. 4, [1030]. 1754, nom. cons.

鳄梨属 e li shu

Li Xiwen (李锡文 Li Hsi-wen), Li Jie (李捷); Henk van der Werff

Evergreen trees or shrubs. Leaves papery to thickly leathery, pinninerved, ± pubescent. Cymose panicle axillary or subterminal, composed of pedunculate cymes or rarely subumbels, bracteate and bracteolate. Flowers bisexual, pedicellate. Perianth tube short; perianth lobes 6, subequal or outer 3 smaller, hairy, dilated after anthesis, caducous or persistent. Fertile stamens 9, in 3 whorls; filaments filiform, complanate, pilose, those of 3rd whorl each with 2 glands at base, others glandless; anthers 4-celled, cells introrse in 1st and 2nd whorls, all extrorse or upper 2 cells lateral and lower 2 cells extrorse in 3rd whorl. Staminodes 3, of innermost whorl, sagittate-cordate, stalked; stalk pilose. Ovary ovoid; style slender, hairy; stigma discoid. Drupe fleshy, small and globose, or large and ovoid or pear-shaped; fruit stalk ± dilated and fleshy, or terete.

About 50 species: mainly distributed in North and South America, only a few species distributed in SE Asia; one species (introduced) in China.

1. **Persea americana** Miller, Gard. Dict., ed. 8, *Persea*. 1768.

鳄梨 e li

Laurus persea Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 130. 1753; *Persea gratissima* C. F. Gaertner.

Evergreen trees, ca. 10 m tall. Bark gray-green, longitudinally fissured. Leaves alternate; petiole 2–5 cm, slightly sulcate adaxially, sparsely pubescent; leaf blade usually somewhat glaucous abaxially, green adaxially, narrowly elliptic, elliptic, ovate, or obovate, 8–20 × 5–12 cm, leathery, sparsely yellowish brown pubescent adaxially but very densely so abaxially when mature, midrib conspicuously elevated abaxially, impressed on lower part but plane on upper part adaxially, lateral veins 5–7 pairs, very elevated abaxially, slightly elevated adaxially, base cuneate or acute to subrounded, apex acute. Cymose panicles 8–14 cm, most of them inserted on lower part of branchlet, pedunculate; peduncle 4.5–7 cm, peduncle and rachis densely yellowish brown pubescent; bracts and bracteoles filiform, ca. 2 mm, densely yellowish brown pubescent. Pedicels up to 6 mm, densely yellowish brown pubescent. Flowers yellow-greenish,

5–6 mm. Perianth densely yellowish brown pubescent outside and inside; perianth tube obconical, ca. 1 mm; perianth lobes 6, oblong, 4–5 mm, obtuse, outer 3 smaller, all dilated after anthesis and caducous. Fertile stamens 9, ca. 4 mm; filaments filiform, complanate, densely pilose, those of 3rd whorl each with 2 complanate ovate and orange glands at base, others glandless; anthers 4-celled; cells introrse in 1st and 2nd whorls, extrorse in 3rd whorl. Staminodes 3, of innermost whorl, sagittate-cordate, ca. 0.6 mm, glabrous, stalked; stalk ca. 1.4 mm, pilose. Ovary ovoid, ca. 1.5 mm, densely pilose; style ca. 2.5 mm, densely pilose; stigma slightly dilated, discoid. Fruit yellow-green or reddish brown, large, usually pear-shaped, sometimes ovoid or globose, 8–18 cm; exocarp corky; mesocarp fleshy and edible. Fl. Feb–Mar, fr. Aug–Sep.

Cultivated on a small scale. Fujian (Fuzhou, Zhangzhou), Guangdong (Guangzhou, Shantou), Hainan (Haikou), Sichuan (Xichang), Taiwan, S Yunnan (Xishuangbanna) [native to tropical America; widely cultivated in tropical to warm-temperate regions elsewhere].

This species is a famous fruit tree (avocado).

