

78. ROTHMANNIA Thunberg, Kongl. Vetensk. Acad. Handl. 37: 65. 1776.

野椴子属 ye zhi zi shu

Chen Tao (陈涛); Charlotte M. Taylor

Shrubs or large trees, unarmed. Raphides absent. Leaves opposite and generally isophyllous or frequently apparently verticillate in whorls of 3 due to marked anisophylly grouping 2 leaves at a node plus an apparently single leaf on a short to reduced axillary branch, sometimes with domatia; stipules persistent, interpetiolar, triangular. Inflorescences terminal or pseudoaxillary, congested-cymose and several flowered or reduced to 1 flower, sessile or pedunculate, bracteate or bracts reduced. Flowers sessile to pedicellate or pedunculate, bisexual, monomorphic. Calyx limb velvety pubescent inside, truncate to 5-lobed. Corolla white to pale green with red or purple to brown spots, narrowly to broadly funnellform or campanulate, often fleshy to leathery, glabrous inside; lobes 5(–7), convolute in bud to left or right depending on species. Stamens 5(–7), inserted in corolla tube, included or partly exerted; filaments short or reduced; anthers dorsifixed. Ovary partially to perhaps completely [1 or]2-celled, ovules numerous on 2 to several large parietal or perhaps sometimes axile placentas; stigma clavate, with receptive surface confined to shortly bilobed apex, exerted or included. Fruit baccate, thickly fleshy to leathery, globose to ellipsoid and sometimes relatively large, smooth or ridged, yellow to brown, with calyx limb persistent; seeds numerous, large, angled to sublenticular, embedded in pulp.

At least 30 species: tropical Africa, Asia, and Madagascar; one species in China.

Rothmannia does not seem at all well known in Asia, as to species or generic limits. The distinctive growth form of *Rothmannia*, with some or several nodes bearing apparently unequal and ternate leaves, is due to the development of one very short axillary branchlet that bears one leaf (the other being reduced to absent). The flowers are often if not usually nocturnal. *Rothmannia* has been described by some authors as having a 1-locular ovary with parietal placentas, at least in Africa (Bridson & Verdcourt, Fl. Trop. E. Africa, Rub. (Pt. 2), 511–512. 1988), but the Asian species have 2-celled ovaries with apparently axile placentas (Puff et al., Rubiaceae of Thailand, 60. 2005).

The African species *Rothmannia longiflora* Salisb. is occasionally cultivated in tropical Asia, including Hong Kong (S. Y. Hu & K. H. Yung 403, MO!). This species has elliptic leaves that are 6–11 × 3–5 cm and relatively large showy flowers, with the tubular calyx limb 5–10 mm and subtruncate or with small lobes 1–4 mm, and a slenderly funnellform, relatively large corolla with tubes 12–14 cm and lobes 1–4 cm.

1. *Rothmannia daweishanensis* Y. M. Shui & W. H. Chen, Novon 13: 322. 2003.

大围山野椴子 da wei shan ye zhi zi

Trees, 10–15 m tall; bark dark gray; branches glabrous, lenticellate. Petiole ca. 3 mm, glabrous; leaf blade drying stiffly papery, greenish brown, ovate to elliptic, 10–14 × 4–5 cm, both surfaces glabrous and shiny, base cuneate to acute and sometimes slightly decurrent, apex acuminate with tip then blunt; secondary veins 5 or 6 pairs; stipules broadly triangular-ovate, 1.5–2 × 2–3 mm, acuminate. Inflorescence terminal or pseudoaxillary, 1-flowered, glabrous; peduncle articulate, basal portion ca. 0.5 cm, apical portion (“pedicel”) 20–25 mm; bracteoles triangular, ca. 1.5 mm, sericeous adaxially, glabrous abaxially. Calyx sparsely sericeous outside; ovary portion ellipsoid, ca. 3 mm; limb with basal tubular portion 2–2.5 mm, inside densely villous and with short colleters; lobes linear-oblong to spatulate, 14–16 × 0.7–0.9 mm, 1-veined, obtuse. Corolla campanulate, glabrous throughout; tube white outside, inside striate and/or speckled with purple, 50–55 mm, at base with slender portion 6–7 × ca. 5 mm, abruptly dilated above this, ca. 30 mm in diam. at middle; lobes white outside, purple-speckled inside, overlapping to left, broadly ovate, 18–20 × 22–23 mm, obtuse. Ovary with placentas parietal, apparently confluent; style ca. 50 mm; stigmatic portion ca. 20 × 1 mm. Berry ellipsoid becoming subglobose with base swollen-stipitate, 4–5 cm in diam., color inside and out unknown, smooth; seeds ca. 12 × 8 × 4 mm. Fl. Oct–Dec, fr. Dec–Mar.

Rocky crevices in limestone rain forests; 300–600 m. Yunnan (Maguan) [Vietnam].

Shui and Chen described the flowers of this species as being (paraphrased here) terminal on a reduced branch that is produced in an axillary position. The inflorescence in other species of *Rothmannia* is a congested or reduced cyme generally borne on a short peduncle produced in a terminal or pseudoaxillary position; thus their “reduced branch” is here treated as being the peduncle (i.e., the structure directly bearing the solitary flower. In general, these structures have been interpreted variously by different authors. Zhang et al. (Acta Phytotax. Sin. 45: 92. 2007) reported this species also from Vietnam.

Fl. China 19: 304–305. 2011.