

14. TRADESCANTIA Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 288. 1753.

紫万年青属 *zi wan nian qing shu*

Rhoeo Hance; *Zebrina* Schnizlein.

Herbs perennial. Rhizomes absent. Stems decumbent, ascending, or erect. Leaves distichous or spirally arranged. Cincinni pseudoterminal or lateral, solitary, fascicled, or forming a panicle, sessile; involucre bracts mostly spathe-like; bracts filiform. Flowers actinomorphic. Sepals free or connate at base, boat-shaped. Petals free or with claws fused at base, white or pink, ovate. Stamens 6, all fertile, subequal or antepetalous 3 shorter; filaments glabrous or bearded; anther locules ellipsoid or oblong, longitudinally dehiscent. Ovary 3-loculed; ovules 2 per locule. Capsule 3-valved, ovoid. Seeds (1 or) 2 per valve, subpyramidal, rugose reticulate; hilum linear, minute.

About 70 species: mainly in tropical America; two species (introduced) in China.

- 1a. Sepals and petals free, not united into a tube; leaves not striped adaxially; petals white; stems erect, simple 1. *T. spathacea*
1b. Sepals and petals united at base into a tube; leaves silvery striped adaxially; petals pink; stems prostrate or decumbent, branched 2. *T. zebrina*

1. *Tradescantia spathacea* Swartz, Prodr. 57. 1788.

紫背万年青 *zi bei wan nian qing*

Rhoeo discolor (L'Héritier) Hance; *R. spathacea* (Swartz) Stearn; *Tradescantia discolor* L'Héritier.

Herbs perennial. Stems erect, often forming colonies, simple, glabrous. Leaves alternate, sometimes seemingly spirally arranged, sessile; leaf sheath sometimes pilose at mouth; leaf blade dark green adaxially, purple abaxially, oblong-lanceolate, 20–40 × 3–6 cm, glabrous, somewhat fleshy, base narrowed and semiclasping, apex acuminate. Flowers in axillary, pedunculate, simple or forked, many-flowered umbels subtended by 2 large, conduplicate, ovate bracts to 3 cm. Petals white, ovate, 5–8 mm, apex abruptly acute. Seeds rugose.

Naturalized. Hong Kong [native to Caribbean region and Central America].

Widely cultivated as an ornamental in S China. The flower is used medicinally for the treatment of dysentery, enterorrhagia, and hemoptysis.

2. *Tradescantia zebrina* Bosse, Vollst. Handb. Blumengärtnererei 4: 655. 1846.

吊竹梅 *diao zhu mei*

Zebrina pendula Schnizlein.

Herbs perennial. Stems prostrate or decumbent, often forming dense mats or colonies, branched, rooting at nodes, glabrous or pilose. Leaves alternate, sessile; leaf sheath 8–12 × 5–8 mm, thin, membranous, long-ciliate at mouth, otherwise glabrous or sparsely villous; leaf blade with 2 longitudinal, silver stripes adaxially, purple abaxially, ovate, 3–10 × 1.5–3.2 cm, somewhat fleshy, glabrous or sparsely pilose on both surfaces, base rounded, apex acute or acuminate. Flowers in clusters subtended by 2 large, leaflike, narrow, ciliate bracts. Sepals lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate, ca. 5 × 1.5 mm. Petals rose pink, ovate, ca. 6 mm, apex obtuse. Seeds rugulose.

Naturalized. Fujian, SW Guangxi (Longzhou Xian), Hong Kong, SW Taiwan (Gaoxiong Shi) [native to tropical America].

Commonly cultivated in S China for its attractive flowers. The leaf is applied to reduce swellings.

