
沙针属  sha zhen shu

Shrubs or small trees evergreen. Branches usually 3-ridged or -angled. Leaves alternate, ± sessile, elliptic-lanceolate or elliptic-obovate, usually ± leathery, pinnately veined, lateral veins inconspicuous. Inflorescences axillary; male ones cymose; bisexual and female ones often 1-flowered; bracts and bracteoles on male inflorescences caducous. Flowers unisexual (when plants dioecious) or bisexual. Bisexual flowers: perianth mostly connate to ovary, lobes 3(or 4), triangular or ovate, with a tuft of hair adaxially. Stamens 3(or 4), short, on the base of lobes; anthers ovoid, cells distinct, parallel, dehiscence longitudinal. Disk nearly flat, sinuate at margin. Ovary inferior, 1-loculed; ovules 2–4. Style needle-shaped; stigmas 3(or 4)-parted. Male flowers: stamens slightly longer than bisexual flowers; ovary rudimentary. Female flowers: bracteoles more prominent; perianth tube shorter. Fruit a drupe, relatively small (to 1 cm), usually with rudimentary perianth at apex or with only rudimentary disk, exocarp fleshy, endocarp crustaceous. Seeds globose.

Six or seven species: Africa, Asia, Europe; one species in China.

*Osyris japonica* Thunberg is *Helwingia japonica* (Thunberg) Dietrich (Helwingiaceae/Cornaceae s.l.).


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*Osyris arborea* Wallich ex A. Candolle; *O. arborea* var. *rotundifolia* P. C. Tam; *O. arborea* var. *stipitata* Lecomte ["stipitata"]; *O. lanceolata* Hochstetter & Steudel ex A. Candolle, nom. illeg. superfl.; *O. wightiana* Wallich ex Wight.

Plants 2–5 m tall. Branches slender, 3-angled when young. Leaf blade grayish green, 1.2–6 × 0.6–2 cm, leathery, sometimes rugose on both surfaces, with dense glands, base gradually narrowed or obtuse, apex acute to cuspidate or rounded. Male inflorescences 2–4–13-flowered; peduncle to 11 mm. Female inflorescences 1–3-flowered; bracts minute, caducous. Male flowers: pedicel 4–8 mm; perianth ca. 4 mm in diam., lobes 3, yellow or green, sometimes flushed brown, ca. 1.5 mm. Stamens 3, filaments very short, disk fleshy; sterile ovary very small, at center of disk. Female flowers usually solitary, sometimes to 4 in subumbell; pedicel to 25 mm, enlarged at apex; bracteoles 2, linear-spatulate, ca. as long as ovary, soon caducous, disk and stamens as in male but stamens sterile. Bisexual flowers similar to female but with fertile stamens; stigmas 3. Drupe orange to red when ripe, drying pale blackish, subglobose or pear-shaped, 4.5–10 mm in diam. Fl. Apr–Jun, fr. Oct.

Thickets; 600–2700 m. Guangxi, Sichuan, Xizang, Yunnan [Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam; Africa, S Europe].

This is a very widespread and variable species with several widely used synonyms. Plants with stipitate fruits have been described as *Osyris arborea* var. *stipitata*, but there are collections with shorter stipes that link that form to the typical, sessile-fruited form.