

ALCHORNEA Sw.

Dioecious trees; stems without latex; indumentum of minute appressed stellate hairs; leaves simple, palmatinerved (in ours), often with laminar embedded glands near base, entire or dentate, exstipulate; flowers apetalous, in spiciform axillary (sometimes compound) racemes; bracts eglandular; _ calyx splitting into 3-5 valvate segments; disk central, confluent with bases of stamens; stamens usually 8, filaments shorter than anthers; pistillode absent; _ flowers sessile or subsessile; sepals 4, imbricate, entire; disk obsolete; ovary 2-locular, ovules 1 in each locule; styles 2, free, elongated, not lobed; fruit capsular; seeds tuberculate, ecarunculate.

This genus of 50 species is best developed in South America and southern Central America. In Mexico, only the following species is found. Alchorneae--Alchorneinae.

Alchornea latifolia Sw. Prodr. Veg. Ind. Occ. 98. 1788.

In barrancas in mesic montane forests with Carpinus, Magnolia, Podocarpus, et al., or tropical deciduous forest with Croton, Fraxinus, Prunus, 1200-1700 m.

Jal., Gro., Oax., Pue., Ver., Chis.; Centr. Amer.; W. Ind. (Jamaica, Swartz, S, the holotype); S. Amer. (Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador).

Jal., Mpio. Talpa de Allende, barranca 11-12 mi S of Talpa (McVaugh 21389, 21402); 9-10 km N of La Cuesta, below pass to Talpa (McVaugh 23397).

Dioecious tree up to 25 m high; stems glabrous; leaves subcoriaceous to coriaceous, ovate to elliptic, mostly 8-20 cm long, 3-8 cm broad, obtuse or rounded at apex to more often acuminate, rounded to subcordate and with 2-4 embedded laminar glands at base; 3-veined at base, with 5-8 lateral veins, glabrous except for axillary tufts of hair beneath; margins often coarsely dentate but sometimes subentire; petioles 2-5 cm long; inflorescences generally ramiflorous (below the leaves); male flowers in usually compound pseudospikes 5-30 cm long; calyx splitting into 2-4 lobes ca 1.5 mm long; female spikes unbranched (or very sparsely branched), 3-20 cm long; fruiting pedicel stout, 1-1.5 mm long; sepals 2-2.8 mm long; ovary stellate-pubescent; styles mostly 10-20 mm long, glabrous; capsules 8-10 mm broad; seeds 4.8-6.3 mm long.

The collections recorded from a single area in western Jalisco

are considerably disjunct from the nearest stations in Guerrero and Puebla, but do not appear atypical for this widespread and variable species.