

ELATINACEAE

by

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Aquatic herbs or undershrubs. Leaves opposite or verticillate, simple. Stipules present. Flowers axillary, solitary, glomerate or fascicled, actinomorphic or zygomorphic, hermaphrodite. Sepals 3—5, free or shortly connate, imbricate, persistent. Petals as many as the sepals, free, imbricate, persistent. Stamens as many or twice as many as the sepals, persistent; the filaments often dilated; anthers dorsifixed, 2-celled, longitudinally dehiscent. Ovary superior, 3—5-celled, 3—5-carpelled; styles 3—5, free, short, persistent; stigmas capitate. Ovules numerous in 2 or more rows on each of the axillary placentas. Fruit a small septicidal capsule. Seeds many, small. Endosperm scanty or wanting. Embryo straight or curved.

About 40 species in 2 genera in temperate, tropical and subtropical regions.

Bergia Linnaeus, Mant. 2: 152. 1771

Annual herbs, erect, ascending or decumbent, glabrous or pubescent. Leaves opposite, serrate or entire. Flowers solitary or fascicled. Sepals usually 5, more or less acute, keeled by the green midvein, margins membranaceous. Petals oblong-ovate. Stamens 10 or less. Ovary globose or ovoid, 5-celled. Capsule globose or ovoid. Seeds straight and curved.

About 20 species, mainly in the tropics of the Old World.

Bergia capensis L.

LINNAEUS, Mant. 2: 241. 1771; ARNOLDO, Zakflora 91. 1954; MONACHINO, Phytologia 5: 184. 1955; ARNOLDO, Zakflora 119. 1964; — *B. aquatica* ROXBURG, Coromand. 2: 22, t. 142. 1798; — *B. verticillata* WILLDENOW, Spec. Plant. 2: 770. 1799; — *Elatine luxurians* DELILE, Fl. Aegypt. t. 26, fig. 1. 1813; — *E. verticillata* WRIGHT & ARNOTT, Prodr. 41. 1834; — *Bergia sessiliflora* GRISEBACH, Catal. Pl. Cub. 40. 1866 (corr. p. 287); URBAN, Symb. Ant. 8: 759. 1921.

Glabrous herb; branches ascending, usually rooting at the lower nodes, terete, red or pink, succulent. Leaves subsessile, oblanceolate, subacute or obtuse at

the apex, acute at the base, up to 3 cm long and 1.3 mm wide, finely serrulate with red teeth. Stipules lanceolate-deltoid, acute, dentate, membranaceous, about 3 mm long. Flowers in sessile or subsessile, few- or many-flowered clusters. Sepals broadly elliptic, acute and mucronate, about 1.5 mm long. Petals oblong, white, about 2 mm long. Stamens 10; filaments filiform, subulate near the base, about 1.5 mm long; anthers small. Ovary globose or subglobose, 1.5 mm; styles short. Capsule globose with 5 longitudinal furrows, about 2.5 mm in diam. Seeds curved, 0.5 mm long, strongly reticulate.

India, Ceylon, Malaysia, and north Africa; introduced in the West Indies and South America.

Inhabitant of wet places; in Bonaire to be found on places inundated after rains, and around tankies.

BONAIRE: Sabana (Arnoldo 411, fl. & fr. Feb.); around tankie near Jatoe Bacoe (Stoffers 658, fl. & fr. Nov.).