

# GUIDE TO THE GENERA OF LIANAS AND CLIMBING PLANTS IN THE NEOTROPICS

## GRISELINIACEAE

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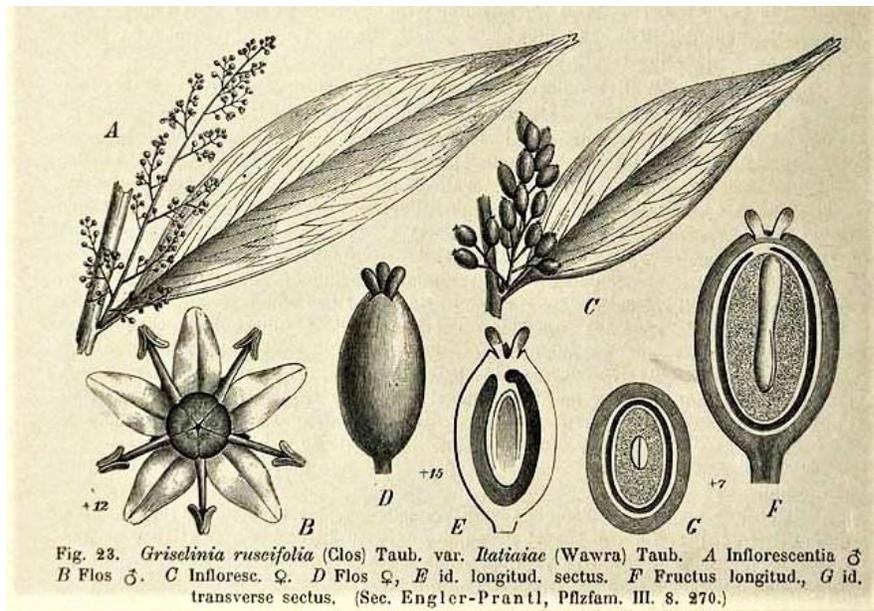


Fig. 23. *Griselinia ruscifolia* (Clos) Taub. var. *Itatiaiae* (Wawra) Taub. A Inflorescentia ♂ B Flos ♂. C Infloresc. ♀. D Flos ♀, E id. longitud. sectus. F Fructus longitud., G id. transverse sectus. (Sec. Engler-Prantl, Pflzfam. III. 8. 270.)

*Griselinia ruscifolia* from Engler, Pflanzenr. Vol. 229. 1928

A family of trees, shrubs and vines with temperate South American-New Zealand disjunction, with one species extending into the tropics in SE Brazil. The family consists of a single genus, *Griselinia* with 7 species; in the Neotropics, the family is represented by *G. ruscifolia* (Gay)

Baill. a vine distributed in

Brazil from the States of Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo south to Rio Grande do Sul and Chile, in wet forests.

**Diagnosics:** *Griselinia* is recognized by the scrambling habit, with hanging stems (sometimes an epiphytic shrub), leaves distichous, simple, elliptic with entire margins, commonly 3-mucronate at apex, and finely pinnate, arcuate veins.

## General Characters

1. STEMS. Cylindrical with moderate secondary growth; cross section with regular anatomy, xylem forming a continuous cylinder traversed by narrow rays (Metcalfe & Chalk, 1957).
2. EXUDATES. No information has been reported on the color and nature of exudates in *Griselinia*, as a result, it seems fair to conclude that they are odorless and *colorless*.
3. CLIMBING MECHANISM. Main stems *scrambling*, also a *root-climber* as many collections report *G. ruscifolia* as an epiphytic shrub.
4. LEAVES. Leaves are simple, alternate, glandless, with arcuate pinnate venation and entire margins; petioles ca. 1 cm long; stipules absent.
5. INFLORESCENCES. Axillary, paniculate thyrses.
6. FLOWERS. Actinomorphic, unisexual, 5-merous; long-pedicelled. Calyx gamosepalous, short; petals free, green, ovate, absent in pistillate flowers; stamens 5, free; disc well developed in staminate flowers; gynoecium inferior, syncarpous, 3-carpellate, with a single fertile carpel bearing a single pendulous ovule, stigmata 3.
7. FRUITS. Ellipsoid black, berry, ca. 5 mm long, with a solitary, ellipsoid seed, nearly as big as the fruit.

## GENERIC DESCRIPTION

**GRISELINIA** G. Forster, Fl. Ins. Austral. Prodr. 75. 1786, (nom. cons.).



*G. ruscifolia* Gay, from Atlas, Historia Chile, 1854

Dioecious, trees, epiphytic shrubs or lianas. Stems cylindrical, reaching a few m in length. Leaves simple, alternate, with entire margins, venation pinnate, arcuate, the apex 3-mucronate; petioles short; stipules absent. Inflorescence axillary, solitary or paired with one of them much smaller than the other. Flowers minute, 5-merous, green; ovary inferior trilocular. Berry ellipsoid, fleshy, black, ca. 5 mm long.

**Distinctive features:** Scrambling lianas, stems slender, cylindrical, with regular anatomy; leaves alternate, simple, entire, with pinnate venation; and small, green flowers.

**Distribution:** A genus of 7 species, 2 in New Zealand and 4 in Chile and one species (*G. ruscifolia*) extending north through SE Brazil to the States of Espirito Santo and southern Minas Gerais, 1000-1800 m elevation in moist forests.

## RELEVANT LITERATURE

Gay, C. 1854. Atlas de la Historia política y física de Chile. Paris.