

## GRISELINIACEAE

P. Acevedo-Rodríguez

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 seven species, one of which is a vine that occurs within the Neotropics.

**Diagnosics:** Scrambling vine, with hanging stems (sometimes an epiphytic shrub), leaves distichous, simple, elliptic with entire margins, commonly 3-mucronate at the acuminate 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 reasonable 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 ~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, ~5 mm long, with a solitary, ellipsoid seed, nearly as big as the fruit.

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

Dioecious, trees, epiphytic shrubs or lianas. Stems cylindrical, reaching a few m in



*Griselinia ruscifolia*, photo by Inao Vásquez.

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 tri-locular.

Berry ellipsoid, fleshy, black, ~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 seven species, five of which are found in southern South America (Chile and southern Argentina). Two species are climbers, but only one of these, i.e., *G. ruscifolia*, occurs in the Neotropics in S.E. Brazil in the states of Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais; moist forest; 1,000–1,800 m.