

## OLEACEAE

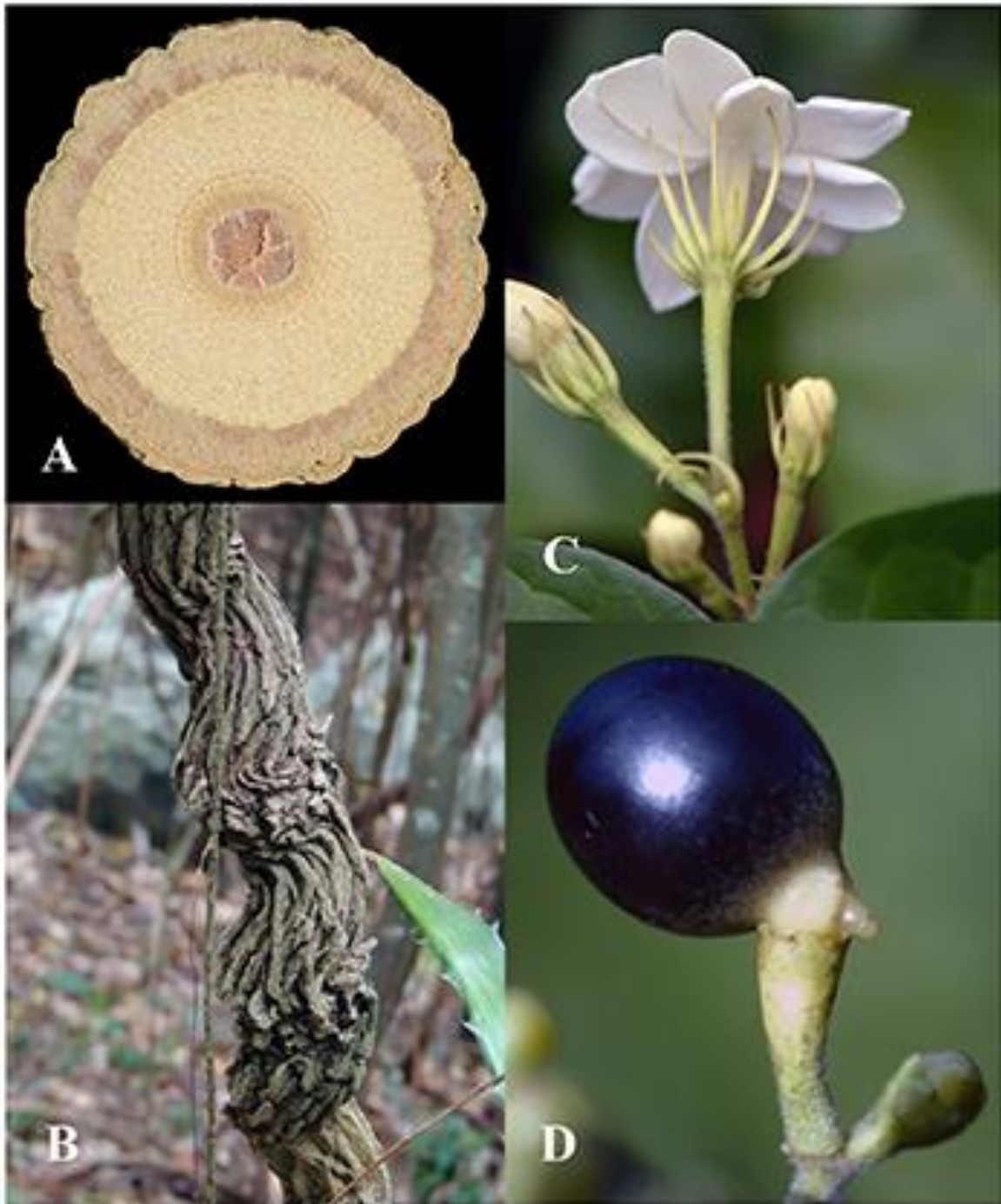
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A nearly cosmopolitan family with 27 genera and ~764 species of shrubs, trees and lianas. Lianas are represented in the Neotropics by the introduced genus *Jasminum* with several species cultivated as garden plants; at least two species have become naturalized in areas of the Neotropics; in secondary forests and scrubs at low elevations.

**Diagnostics:** Twining lianas; leaves opposite, simple or compound (trifoliolate in our region), with entire margins and pinnate venation; exstipulate; corolla gamopetalous, white, ~2.5 cm long, fragrant.

### General Characters

1. **STEMS.** Woody, cylindrical, very dense; bark fissured, corky (Figure 189B); cross section with regular vascular anatomy, xylem with confluent bands of paratracheal parenchyma, inconspicuous rays, and narrow vessels (Figure 189A).
2. **EXUDATES.** Watery or not visible.
3. **CLIMBING MECHANISMS.** Although some climbing species of *Jasminum* are scramblers, the two species that are naturalized in the Neotropics are twiners, with short, opposite, lateral hanging branches.
4. **LEAVES.** Opposite, simple or compound, with pinnate venation and entire margins; petioles short to long, eglandular; stipules absent.
5. **INFLORESCENCE.** Cymes axillary or terminal on short lateral branches; bracts and bracteoles small, conspicuous.



**Figure 189.** A. Stem cross section of *Jasminum fluminense*. B. Stems with fissured, corky bark of *Jasminum fluminense*. C. Distal portion of cyme, flower with linear sepals, corolla 9-lobed of *Jasminum sambac*. D. Berry with aborted coccus of *Jasminum fluminense*. Photos by P. Acevedo.

6. PEDICELS. Commonly elongated.
7. FLOWERS. Fragrant, bisexual, actinomorphic, commonly ~2.5 cm long; calyx campanulate or funnel-shaped, with 4–9, short to elongated lobes; corolla gamopetalous, white, salverform, 4–9-lobed; stamens 2, adnate to the corolla tube, inserted; ovary superior, syncarpous, bi-carpellate, with a single, pendulous ovule per carpel.
8. FRUIT. A fleshy, black-purple berry, commonly with an aborted coccus; seed one per coccus.

**JASMINUM** Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 7. 1753.

Erect or scrambling shrubs or twining vines; stems cylindrical; bark corky, fissured (Figure 189B); cross section with regular anatomy (Figure 189A). Leaves opposite, simple or trifoliolate (in our species); petioles short to long, adaxially canaliculate; stipules absent. Flowers showy and fragrant, solitary, clustered in axillary or terminal cymes; calyx 4–9-lobed; corolla tube narrow, lobes 4–9, imbricate; stamens 2, filaments very short; ovary superior, bilobed, the style slender and elongate, commonly with 2 elongate stigma. Berry globose, 5–8 mm diam.

**Distinctive features:** Twining vines with opposite, simple or compound, exstipulate leaves; corolla tubular, fragrant and white.

**Distribution:** A pantropical genus of ~200 species, two of which are naturalized in the West Indies.



**Figure 190.** A. *Jasminum sambac* with scrambling habit. B. *Jasminum* sp. with twining stems. Photos by P. Acevedo.