

## SCHLEGELIACEAE

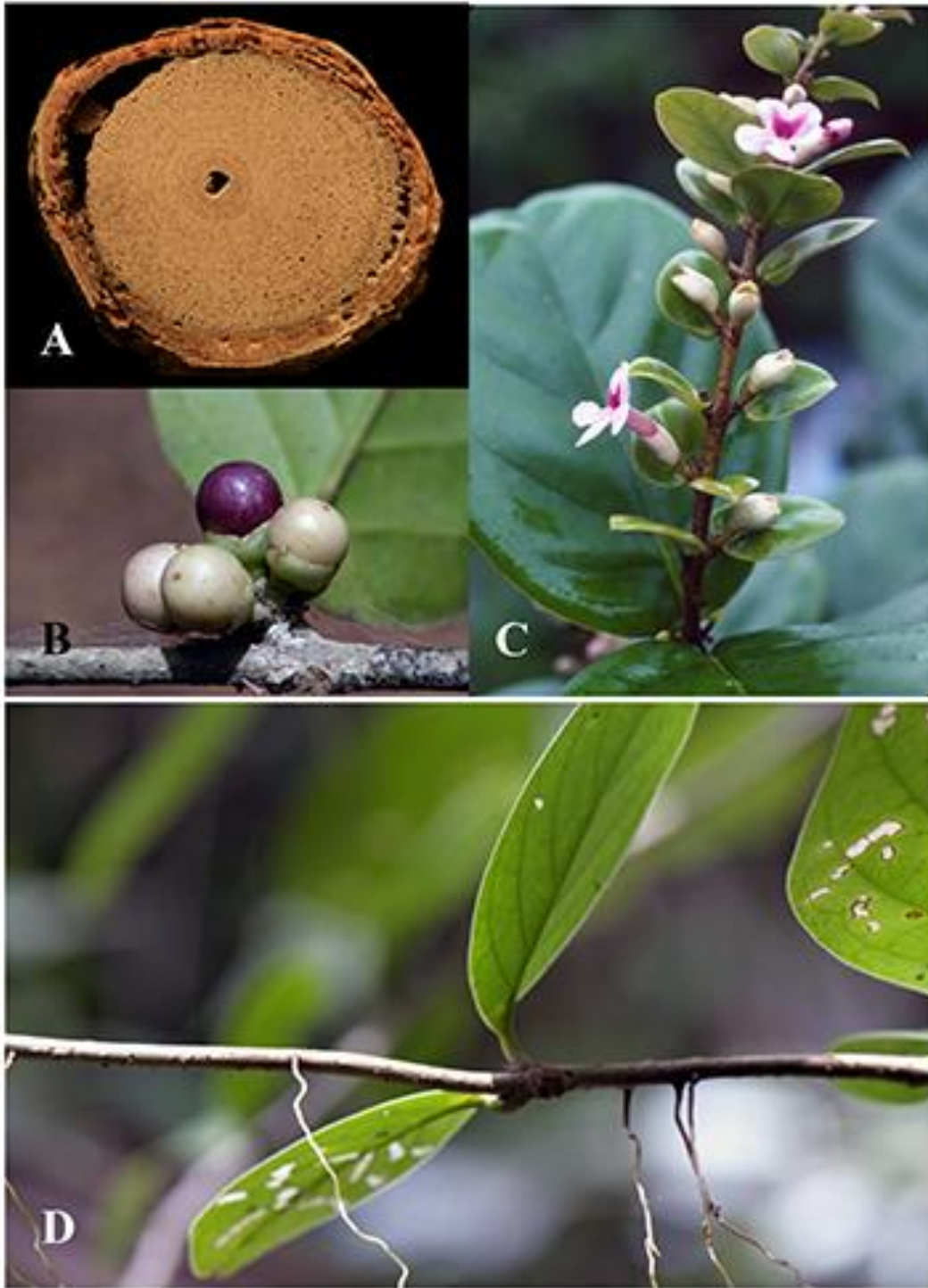
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A neotropical family with four genera and 37 species of root-climbing lianas, epiphytic shrubs, or exceptionally free standing shrubs or trees. Lianas are represented by the genus *Schlegelia* with ~23 species found in moist to wet forests at low to middle elevations.

**Diagnostics:** Root-climbing lianas; leaves simple, opposite, coriaceous, with entire and commonly revolute margins, the lamina commonly abaxially foveate toward the base; exstipulate; calyx cup-shaped, truncate; corolla gamopetalous, < 2 cm long, often lavender. Might be confused with members of Plantaginaceae but the presence of large, elliptic to oval leaves set it apart from members of that family.

### General Characters

1. STEMS. Woody, cylindrical, lenticellate; furrowed, turning cylindrical with age, 3–15 m in length and 0.5–1.5 cm in diam.; cross section with regular vascular anatomy, xylem with numerous narrow rays, with confluent bands of paratracheal parenchyma (Figure 228A).
2. EXUDATES. Watery or not visible.
3. CLIMBING MECHANISMS. All species of *Schlegelia* are root-climbers, with short lateral branches (Figure 228D).
4. LEAVES. Opposite, simple, coriaceous, with pinnate venation and entire, revolute margins, in some species the lamina abaxially foveate near the secondary vein axils; petioles short, stout, eglandular; stipules absent.

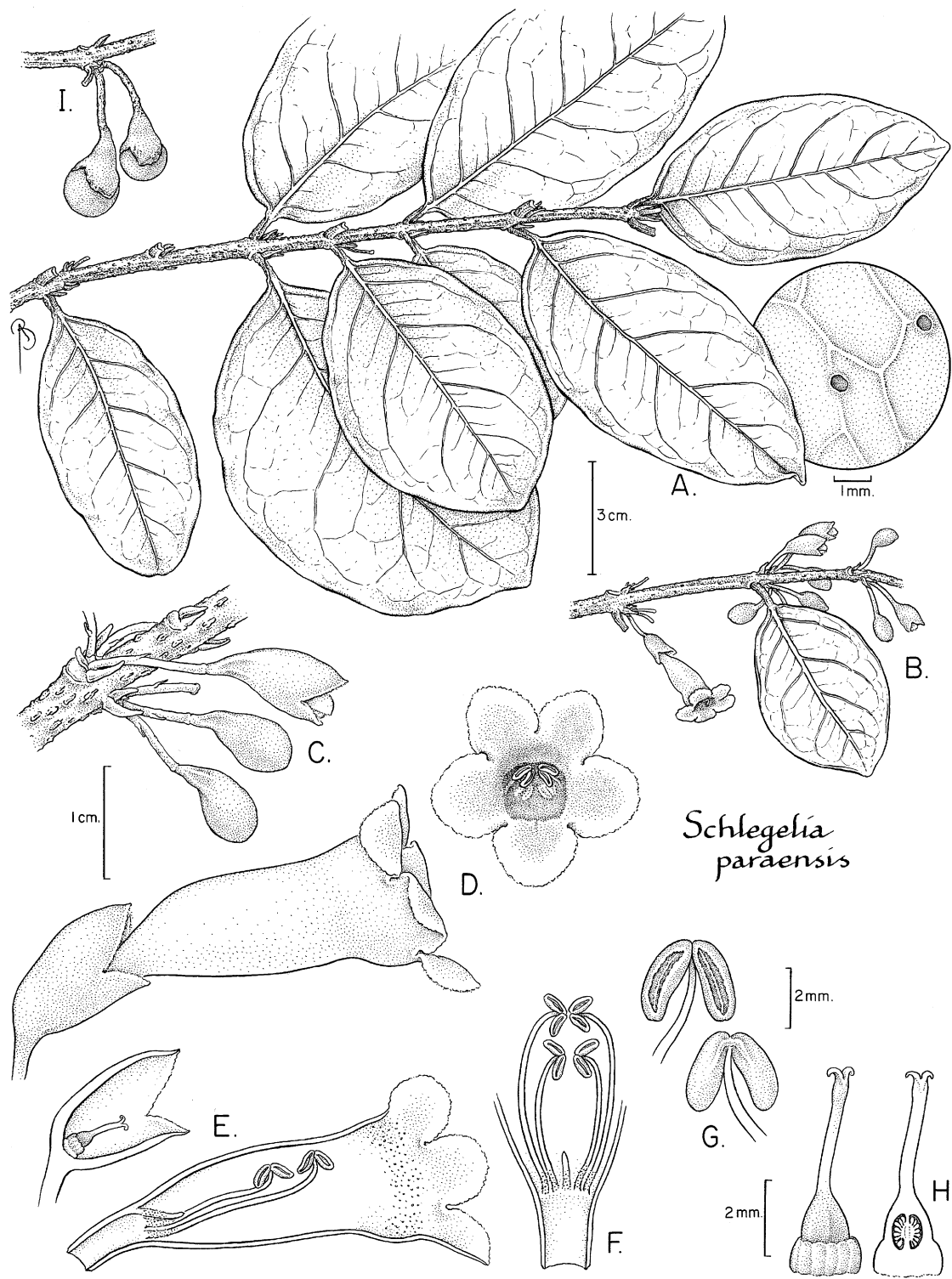


**Figure 228.** *Schlegelia*. **A.** Stem cross section of *S. violacea*. **B.** Fruit cluster of *S. dariensis*. **C.** Flowering branch of *S. dariensis*. **D.** Root-climbing branch of *Schlegelia* sp. Photos by P. Acevedo.

5. INFLORESCENCE. Axillary cymes, sometimes in short to elongated frondo-bracteate racemes with flowers solitary or in small clusters at the nodes of inflorescence (Figure 228C).
6. PEDICELS. Short to nearly absent.
7. FLOWERS. Bisexual, zygomorphic, commonly < 2 cm long, slightly geniculate at the base; calyx cupular, truncate; corolla gamopetalous, tubular-funnel-shaped, 5-lobed; stamens 2, inserted or exserted; staminodia 2; ovary superior, syncarpous, bi-carpellate, bi-locular, with multiseriate ovules on a central placenta.
8. FRUIT. A globose berry, ~1 cm tall (Figure 228B); seeds numerous embedded in a pulp.

**SCHLEGELIA** Miquel, Bot. Zeitung 2: 785. 1844.

Lianas or shrubs, climbing by adventitious roots. Stems cylindrical, interpetiolar zone not glandular, reaching 5–15 m in length, often lenticellate; cross section with regular anatomy, xylem with paratracheal confluent bands of parenchyma and numerous, narrow rays (Figure 228A). Leaves opposite, simple, coriaceous, sometimes abaxially foveate near the secondary vein axils (Figure 229A), margins entire, revolute. Inflorescences of axillary cymes, sometimes greatly reduced to a fascicle, or sometimes in short to elongated frondo-bracteate racemes with flowers solitary or in small clusters at the nodes of inflorescence, a few species have cauliflorous inflorescences. Calyx simple, crateriform, truncate or irregularly lobed; corolla white, pink, purple, or reddish, zygomorphic, tubular-campanulate or tubular, more or less glabrous outside, the lobes lepidote inside; stamens didynamous, inserted or exserted, staminode 1 or wanting; ovary globose with fused annular disc at the base, style short with 2 short stigmatic branches. Berries with a thin pericarp and with a persistent calyx on the basal portion; seeds numerous, small, without wings, surrounded by a pulp.



**Figure 229.** *Schlegelia paraensis*. **A.** Branch & detail of leaf fovea. **B.** Flowering branch. **C.** Detail of inflorescence with flower buds and post-anthesis flower. **D.** Flower, lateral and top views. **E.** Flower, longitudinal section, calyx with gynoecium & corolla with stamens & staminode. **F.** Detail of corolla at the insertion of didynamous stamens & staminode. **G.** Anthers, dorsal & frontal views. **H.** Gynoecium and disc, lateral view & longitudinal section showing placentation. Drawing courtesy of Bobbi Angell.

**Distinctive features:** Root-climbing lianas with opposite exstipulate leaves, short axillary cymes and globose leathery berries with persistent cupular calyx at the base. Vegetatively may be confused with *Aegiphila* in the Lamiaceae but this genus commonly has chartaceous leaves (not coriaceous or rigid-coriaceous) and is a scrambler (not a root-climber).

**Distribution:** A genus of 23 species naturally distributed from southern Mexico to Peru, northern Brazil, Southeastern Brazil, and the West Indies; moist wet and cloud forests; 0–1,800 m.