

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

VIBURNACEAE

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A family of trees and shrubs distributed throughout North temperate regions, extending through montane habitats south to Malesia and S.E. Australia, and south to Central and South America with few elements in Africa. The Viburnaceae comprises 5 genera and about 200 species, of which only *Viburnum undulatum* (Oerst.) Killip & A. C. Sm. from the mountains in Colombia is consistently reported as a scrambling shrub.

Diagnosics: Scrambling shrubs with stellate tomentose indument; opposite, simple, dentate leaves; corymbose inflorescences; and drupaceous fruits.

General Characters

1. **STEMS.** Woody with moderate secondary growth, cylindrical, reaching 5 m in length; cross sections with regular anatomy, showing a large medulla and numerous narrow rays (Metcalfe & Chalk, 1957).
2. **EXUDATES.** Watery or no visible exudates.
3. **CLIMBING MECHANISMS.** Scramblers aided by divaricate, opposite, short branches.
4. **LEAVES.** Opposite, simple, pinnately-veined or sub 3-veined from base with sparsely dentate margins, chartaceous to coriaceous; exstipulate; petioles short, glandless, adaxially canaliculate.
5. **INFLORESCENCE.** Distal on short lateral branches, corymbose cymes.
6. **FLOWERS.** Bisexual, actinomorphic, 5-merous; calyx minute, tubular with 5 rounded sepals; corolla gamopetalous, absent; stamens 5, of similar length, adnate to the corolla

and alternating with the lobes; ovary inferior, syncarpous, 1-locular, with a single ovule, the style short, stigma 3, capitate.

7. FRUIT. A fleshy ellipsoid to globose drupe.



Viburnum undulatum habit, photo by J.J. Botero.

GENERIC DESCRIPTION

VIBURNUM Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 267. 1753.

For the most part trees or erect shrubs. *Viburnum undulatum* is a scrambling shrub with short, opposite plagiotropic branches, extending to 5 m in length. Stems stellate tomentose, cylindrical, glabrescent. Leaves opposite, simple, membranaceous, lanceolate or ovate-lanceolate, 6-10 cm long, the apex caudate-acuminate, the base obtuse to sub-cordiform, the

margins remotely dentate, the upper surface sparingly stellate pubescent, stellate-pubescent and paler beneath. Corymbs with stellate pubescent axes; corolla white, lobes expanded, as long as the tube. Drupes green, ellipsoid, < 1 cm long.

Distinctive features: Stellate pubescent or tomentose scrambling shrubs, leaves simple, opposite, dentate, discolourous.

Distribution: A genus of about 190 species naturally distributed in temperate and warm temperate areas of the Northern Hemisphere, extending to the Andes in South America and tropical Asia, with one species (*V. undulatum* (Oerst.) Killip & A. C. Sm.) reported from Colombia and Venezuela as sometimes growing as a scrambling vine.

RELEVANT LITERATURE

Bernal, R., S.R. Gradstein and M. Celis (eds.). 2019. Catálogo de plantas y líquenes de Colombia. Instituto de Ciencias Naturales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá.
<http://catalogoplantasdecolombia.unal.edu.co>

Metcalf, C.R. and L. Chalk. 1957. Anatomy of the Dicotyledons. Family Caprifoliaceae. Pages 752-758.