

ELAEOCARPACEAE

by

A. L. STOFFERS

(Instituut voor Systematische Plantkunde, Utrecht)

Trees or shrubs. Leaves alternate, opposite, simple; petioles often thickened at both ends. Stipules present, deciduous. Inflorescence consisting of racemes or panicles or flowers solitary. Flowers actinomorphic, 4—5-merous, mostly hermaphrodite. Sepals 4—5. Petals 4—5 or wanting. Stamens numerous, free, attached to the well-developed disk; anthers mostly opening by pores. Ovary superior, 2—many-locular; style one; stigmas 5. Ovules 2—many, with axile placentation. Fruit mostly a capsule, rarely a drupe. Seed with endosperm and rarely with an aril.

About 10 genera with c. 400 species, nearly all in the tropics.

Sloanea Linnaeus, Spec. Plant. 512. 1753

Trees, often with buttressed trunks. Leaves alternate in our species, pinnately-veined, margin entire to dentate. Inflorescence axillary or rarely terminal, racemose or paniculate, few- to many- or only 1-flowered. Sepals 4—11, usually free. Petals wanting. Stamens many; connective always prolonged beyond the anthers into a knob or awn. Ovary 3—6-locular; style parted into as many branches as there are locules in the ovary. Fruit a loculicidally dehiscent capsule armed with flexible or rigid, straight or curved spines; valves 3—6, rigid, often woody. Seeds 1 or 2 (—3) per capsule, covered to the middle or almost completely covered by an aril growing from and firmly attached to the chalazal end; raphe often prominent; testa thin. Embryo straight with thin, flat cotyledons. Endosperm copious.

A genus of more than 100 species in the tropics, of which about 65 in tropical America from Mexico to northern Bolivia and south-eastern coastal Brazil, in Rio Grande do Sul, and in the West Indies.

Sloanea massoni Sw.

SWARTZ, Prodr. 82. 1788; Fl. Ind. Occ. 2: 938. 1800; C. E. SMITH, Contr. Gray Herb. 175: 47. 1954; FOURNET, Fl. Guadeloupe & Martinique 1483. 1978; — *Sloanea truncata* URBAN, Notizbl. 8: 26. 1921; — *Sloanea dentata* LINNAEUS var. *massoni* (Sw.) STEHLÉ, Carib. For. 8: 303. 1947.

Large tree, up to 25 m tall; trunk with large buttresses; branches with rough, brown bark; branchlets robust, glabrate to short-brown-puberulent, often striate. Leaves alternate, often somewhat crowded towards the end of the twigs, petiolate; blades ovate to oval to obovate, obtuse and frequently emarginate at the apex, apex long-acuminate to acute in the larger leaves of young seedlings only, generally rounded-obtuse to cordate at the base or sometimes subacute, 10—40 × 6.5—20 cm, glabrous to puberulent above, glabrate to scantily puberulent beneath, the margin entire and often somewhat undulate, midvein and secondary veins impressed, prominent beneath; petioles 2—10 cm long, terete near the base and subcanaliculate towards the apex, thickened at both ends, striate, often marked with rings, glabrate to scantily brown-puberulent. Stipules lanceolate, obtuse, 3.5 mm long, brown-pubescent, caducous. Inflorescence 2—3 cm long; peduncles 1—2 cm long, pedicels 3—11 mm long, both moderately pubescent. Bracts ovate, boat-shaped, obtuse, entire or dentate. Sepals lanceolate, entire acute, 3—3.5 × 0.8—1 mm, sparsely pubescent without, glabrous within. Petals wanting. Stamens long-exserted; filaments 6—8 mm long, glabrous, expanding at the apex and prolonged beyond the anthers into a short knob; anthers small, 1 mm long. Ovary ovoid, usually 4-locular, 4-angled after anthesis, 2—3 mm long, densely pubescent, gradually passing into the style; style 5—6 mm long, pubescent at the base, glabrous in the upper portion, deeply 4-parted. Capsule 2—3 cm long, ellipsoidal, 4(—5)-valved, the valves 2—4 mm thick, surface densely puberulent with shiny hairs, densely covered with flexible 7—12 mm long straight spines, gradually tapered to the apex, scantily antrorse-hispidulous. Seeds enclosed in a lobed aril which is firmly attached to the chalaza.

Lesser Antilles from Saba to Grenada.

In palmbrake and secondary rainforest.

SABA: in gut between Hellsgate and Sandy Cruz (Stoffers 3443, st. June); Sandy Cruz, 500—600 m (Stoffers 4345, st. Aug.).