

Rauvolfia

Rauvolfia (sometimes spelled Rauwolfia) is a genus of evergreen trees and shrubs, commonly known as devil peppers, in the family Apocynaceae. The genus is named to honor Leonhard Rauwolf. The genus can mainly be found in tropical regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and various oceanic islands.[3][4]

The International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants stipulates that the genus name was established by Carl Linnaeus in his 1753 book *Species Plantarum*,[5][6] which cites his earlier description[7] which states in Botanical Latin that the name is dedicated "to Leonhard Rauwolf": "Leon. Rauwolfio". Although some subsequent authors hypercorrected the Classical Latin letter "v" to a modern "w", this is not accepted by the code of nomenclature.[8]

Rauvolfia serpentina, commonly known as Indian snakeroot or sarpagandha, contains many indole alkaloids.[9]

Reserpine is an alkaloid first isolated from *R. serpentina* and was widely used as an antihypertensive drug[10]

Rauvolfia serpentina is declining in the wild due to collection for its medicinal uses.[11] Consequently, it is listed in CITES Appendix II.[12] Rauvolfia vomitoria is a highly invasive species in Hawai*■*i, and is capable of establishing dense monotypic stands.

Species include:[3]

