

## Cissus

About 350, see text

Cissus is a genus of approximately 350 species of lianas (woody vines) in the grape family (Vitaceae). They have a cosmopolitan distribution, though the majority are to be found in the tropics.

Cissus quadrangularis has been evaluated for potential medical uses. As a source of carotenoids, triterpenoids and ascorbic acid the extracts may have potential for medical effects, including "gastroprotective activity"[2] and benefits in terms of "lipid metabolism and oxidative stress".[3] Cissus quinquangularis was used by the Maasai people of Kenya to relieve some of the symptoms of malaria.[4]

Cissus antarctica, Cissus alata and Cissus incisa are cultivated as garden plants, depending on area of the world. Succulent members of the genus such as Cissus quadrangularis are also found in the nursery trade but tend to be frost tender and are thus not widely cultivated.[5]

Cissus species are used as food plants by the larvae of some Lepidoptera species including Hypercompe eridanus and Hypercompe icasia. They are also consumed by chimpanzees.[6]

The generic name is derived from the Greek word κισσος (kissos), meaning "ivy".[7] In the 1980s the genus was split according to some details of the flower. The large caudiciform species were moved to the new genus Cyphostemma.

The genus name was established by Carl Linnaeus who used species epithets that are adjectives with feminine grammatical gender in Latin (e.g., C. trifoliata L.). This matches the pattern that names of trees ending in -us in Latin have feminine gender, although other plant names ending in -us are usually masculine.[8]

Plants of the World Online currently includes:[9]

Cissus woodrowii in Keesara, Rangareddy district, Andhra Pradesh, India

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Cissus woodrowii in Keesara

Cissus repanda in Keesara

Cissus hypoglauca growing over a creek at Murramarang National Park, Australia

