

Monoecious or dioecious trees or shrubs. Branchlets slender, jointed and striate. Leaves reduced to whorls of small scales, united at base, forming many-toothed sheaths at the nodes; internodes with striate grooves corresponding to the number of leaves. Flowers minute, grouped into unisexual silicate or capitate inflorescence. Male spikes usually terminal on lateral branches. Female heads globose or ovoid, usually sessile and axillary. Bracts whorled, each having a sessile flower and each flower is subtended by a pair of bracteoles. Male flowers with solitary stamen, hooded by 1 or 2 tepals. Female flowers without perianth; ovary minute, 1-loculed; style short with 2 long filiform stigmas. Infructescence globular, ovoid or cylindrical,  $\pm$  woody, formed by enlargement of bract and paired bracteoles which become more elongated enclosing the fruit and open at maturity like valves. Fruit a single seeded flattened, terminally winged samara. Seeds exalbuminous; embryo straight with large flat cotyledons.