

Trees, herbs or shrubs. Leaves opposite or alternate, simple, exstipulate. Inflorescence cymose. Flowers hermaphrodite or unisexual, often bracteate; bracts showy and petaloid or inconspicuous. Perianth 5-lobed, tubular, gamophyllous, petaloid, lower half (the anthocarp) persistent. Stamens 5, but may be, more or less, alternating with the lobes; filaments often unequal, anthers bilocular, dehiscent longitudinally. Pistil monocarpellary, ovary unilocular, with a solitary basal ovule. Fruit a nut, utricle or an achene, enclosed in the anthocarp. Seed endospermic.