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| 1 | 1. Plants herbs, lacking chlorophyll, variously white, yellow, or red ... 3. MONOTROPA | <i>Monotropa</i> |
| 2 | 1. Plants shrubs or small trees, with chlorophyll; at least the leaves green | |
| 3 | 2. Flowers relatively large; corollas more than 10 mm long, slightly zygomorphic, trumpet-shaped, widely spreading toward the tip; leaves tending to be clustered near the branch tips ... 4. RHODODENDRON | <i>Rhododendron</i> |
| 4 | 2. Flowers relatively small; corollas less than 10 mm long, actinomorphic, tubular to more or less urn-shaped, usually somewhat constricted at the tip; leaves usually well spaced along the branches | |
| 5 | 3. Stamens with the filaments elongate and S-shaped, the anthers unawned, dehiscent by short, terminal pores; ovary superior; fruit a dry, urn-shaped capsule with 5 strong ribs ... 2. LYONIA | <i>Lyonia</i> |
| 6 | 3. Stamens with the filaments short and straight; anthers tapered to tubular awns, dehiscent by more or less elongate pores on the tubes; ovary inferior; fruits dry drupes or fleshy berries | |
| 7 | 4. Leaf blades with numerous minute, yellow resin glands, at least on the undersurface; ovary with 10 locules and 10 ovules; fruits drupes with 10 nutlets ... 1. GAYLUSSACIA | <i>Gaylussacia</i> |
| 8 | 4. Leaf blades without resin glands (rarely a few glands in <i>V. corymbosum</i>); ovary with 4 or 5 locules and numerous ovules; fruits berries with numerous seeds ... 5. VACCINIUM | <i>Vaccinium</i> |