

FAMILY: APOCYNACEAE

Apocynaceae, is the dogbane family (order [Gentianales](#)) of [flowering plants](#), including about 400 genera and about 4,555 species of [trees](#), [shrubs](#), woody [vines](#), and herbs. Members of the family are distributed primarily in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. Nearly all members of this family are poisonous, and many species are used medicinally because of the presence of cardiac glycosides and various [alkaloids](#). A number are cultivated as ornamentals for their attractive flowers and foliage.



Description

Members of the family have milky, often poisonous, juice; smooth-margined [leaves](#); and [flowers](#) in clusters (rarely solitary). Some species, notably those in the subfamily [Asclepiadoideae](#), have [pollen](#) massed in bundles called pollinia. The [fruit](#) may be [berry](#)-like or fleshy but usually is a dry pod (follicle) that splits open at maturity, releasing many winged or tufted seeds.



Bloodflower**Bloodflower** (*Asclepias curassavica*).

Major Genera And Species

Garden ornamentals belonging to the family include [periwinkle](#) (*Vinca*), [oleander](#) (*Nerium*), yellow oleander (*Thevetia*), [frangipani](#) (*Plumeria*), Natal plum (*Carissa*), common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), bloodflower (*A. curassavica*), [butterfly weed](#) (*A. tuberosa*), wax flower (*Hoya carnosa*), and crepe jasmine (*Tabernaemontana divaricata*). Several species of the genera *Trachelospermum* (especially star jasmine, *T. jasminoides*)