

Family Characteristics

Fall 2006 HORT 306/608 Plant list 7:

Acanthaceae

Acanthus Family

- A large dicotyledonous family of tropical plants
 - 250 to 346 genera containing 2,500 to 4,300 species
 - Mostly herbaceous plants or shrubs, few small trees
- Tubular to funnel-shaped flowers, sometimes showy, mostly perfect
- Fruits are dehiscent 2-valved capsules, sometimes dehiscing explosively
- The genera *Anisacanthus*, *Barleria*, *Graptophyllum*, *Hypoestes*, *Justicia*, *Odontonema*, *Pachystachys*, *Ruellia*, *Strobilanthes*, and *Thunbergia* are all used in regional landscapes

Hamamelidaceae

Witch Hazel Family

- A dicotyledonous family from mostly warm temperate and subtropical climates
 - 23 to 31 genera containing about 100 species
 - Evergreen to deciduous shrubs and trees
- Flowers may be perfect or imperfect, when imperfect monoecious or dioecious
 - Petals and / or bracts may be showy
- Fruit are mostly persistent dehiscent capsules
- Genera in regional landscapes include *Corylopsis*, *Fothergilla*, *Hamamelis*, *Liquidambar*, *Loropetalum*, and *Parrotia*

Malvaceae

Mallow Family

- A very cosmopolitan dicotyledonous family found in all but the coldest climates
 - 40 to 90 genera containing perhaps a 1,000 species
 - Variable in habit from herbaceous annuals and perennials to shrubs and even trees
- Flowers are axillary, perfect, & often very showy
- Fruits are mostly capsules, but may be berry-like
- Contains several important landscape or economic genera including *Abutilon*, *Althea*, *Gossypium*, *Hibiscus*, *Kosteletzkya*, *Lavatera*, *Malva*, and *Pavonia*

Platanaceae

Sycamore Family

- A small monogeneric dicotyledonous family of 8 to 10 species of large deciduous trees
- All but 2 or 3 species are native to North America
- All have conspicuously mottled bark
- Flowers are monoecious in dense globose heads
- Fruits are aggregates of achenes
- Several species in the genus *Platanus* are important in temperate zone landscapes

Salicaceae

Willow Family

- Small dicotyledonous family of the northern temperate zones
- 2 to 4 genera containing 350 to 400 species
- Imperfect and dioecious, males in catkins, females inconspicuous
- Fruit are small capsules with wind distribute tufted seeds

- Trees in *Populus* and *Salix* genera are important in landscapes, ecology, for basketry, and salicylic acid (aspirin)

Scrophulariaceae

Foxglove Family

- A large dicotyledonous Northern Hemisphere family
 - 179-220 genera containing 2,500 to 3,000 species
 - Mostly herbaceous annuals and perennials, but also a few trees, shrubs, and vines
- Perfect axillary flowers with two-lipped corollas in racemes or cymes, often showy
- Fruits are two-celled capsule or many seeded berries
- Several important regional landscape genera are in the family including:
 - *Angelonia*, *Antirrhinum*, *Castilleja*, *Diascia*, *Digitalis*, *Hebe*, *Leucophyllum*, *Linaria*, *Mimulus*, *Nemesia*, *Paulownia*, *Penstemon*, *Rhodochiton*, *Russelia*, *Schrophularia*, *Torenia*, *Verbascum*, and *Veronica*

Sterculiaceae

Chocolate Family

- Mostly tropical dicotyledonous family
 - 12 to 67 genera containing 700 to 1,500 species
 - Shrubs and trees with occasional vine or herbaceous perennial
- Monoecious or polygamous apetalous flowers, sepals sometimes showy
- Fruit are capsule or follicles
- Type genus smells of dung, hence choice to honor the family with the name of Roman god of privies
- Important ornamental and economic genera include *Brachychiton*, *Cola*, *Firmiana*, *Melochia*, and *Sterculia*

Verbenaceae

Verbena Family

- While this large dicotyledonous family is mostly tropical/subtropical, several members are also from temperate climates
 - 75 to 98 genera containing as many as 3,000 species
 - Wide diversity of growth forms from herbaceous annuals and perennials, shrubs, trees, and vines
- Perfect flowers occur in racemes or cymes, often showy
- Fruits are capsules, drupes, or schizocarps
- Numerous genera in regional landscapes including *Callicarpa*, *Caryopteris*, *Clerodendrum*, *Lantana*, *Verbena*, and *Vitex*

Zygophyllaceae

Caltrop Family

- Small mostly subtropical/tropical dicotyledonous family often from arid regions
 - 20 to 25 genera containing 200 to 240 species
 - Mostly herbaceous or shrubby plants, few small trees
- Flowers mostly perfect, rarely imperfect, solitary or in cymes
- Fruit are usually capsules, but may resemble drupes or berries
- Only genus *Larrea* is important in our region