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Diabelia, a new genus of tribe Linnaeeae subtribe Linnaeinae (Caprifoliaceae)

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Abstract

Recent molecular studies (to be published in a separate paper), have shown that the tribe Linnaeeae subtribe Linnaeinae (Caprifoliaceae *s.l.*) is composed of six monophyletic clades. These correspond to the genera *Dipelta, Kolkwitzia, Linnaea and Vesalea*, but *Abelia* appears polyphyletic. To resolve *Abelia* as monophyletic, and in order to keep most names currently in use within the horticultural and botanical community, the new genus *Diabelia* is proposed here to include the three species previously placed in *Abelia* ser. *Serratae*. *Diabelia* mainly differs from *Abelia* by its inflorescence of paired flowers appearing at the end of short shoots. A key to the genera is also presented. Additionally a new combination in *Vesalea* is validated here.

Key words: Dipsacales, Linnaeeae, *Abelia* ser. *Serratae*

Introduction

A recent molecular study of tribe Linnaeeae based on four plastid regions (*rbc*L, *ndh*F, *trn*L-F and *mat*K) and a reinterpretation of the morphology and evolution of the inflorescence (to be published in a separate paper), see also Landrein (2010) led us to conclude that the genus *Abelia* is not monophyletic. The tribe Linnaeeae subtribe Linnaeinae contains six monophyletic groups:

1. *Abelia* Brown (1818) sect. *Abelia*; three species (*A. chinensis, A. forrestii* and *A. uniflora*)
2. *Abelia* Brown (1818) sect. *Bilaciniatae* ser. *Serratae* Rehder (1901); three species *(A. serrata, A. spathulata* and *A. tetrasepala)*
3. *Dipelta* Maximowicz (1878) ; three species (*D. elegans, D. floribunda* and *D. yunnanensis*)
4. *Kolkwitzia* Graebner in Diels (1901); one species (*K. amabilis*)
5. *Linnaea* Linnaeus (1753); one species (*L. borealis*)
6. *Vesalea* Martens & Galeotti (1843); two species (*V. coriacea* and *V. floribunda*)

Abelia sect. *Abelia* has synflorescences appearing on long arching shoots whereas *Abelia* sect. *Bilaciniatae* ser. *Serratae* has inflorescences that are more similar to those of the other 5 groups, with inflorescences on short shoots (occasionally on repeatedly blooming long shoots). The molecular data also suggest a closer relationship of *Abelia* sect. *Bilaciniatae* ser. *Serratae* with *Kolkwitzia* and *Dipelta* rather than with *Abelia* sect. *Abelia*. *Linnaea* and *Vesalea* are both supported as distinct sister groups with distinctive distribution and morphological characters. To reflect the newly discovered data I provide the name *Diabelia* for the series *Serratae* of *Abelia.*

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