Flora of Tasmania



79 VIOLACEAE 1

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Herbs, shrubs or small trees. Leaves usually alternate, rarely opposite, petiolate, usually stipulate; stipules free or adnate to the petiole; lamina simple, entire or variously dissected, toothed or lobed. Inflorescence usually axillary, a cyme or raceme or sometimes a panicle, or flowers solitary; pedicels bearing live bracteoles. Flowers usually bisexual, actinomorphic or zygomorphic, hypogynous, often cleistogamous, 5-merous, in zygomorphic flowers the lowest petal commonly prolonged into a spur at the base. Stamens (3-)5, filaments very short, free or \pm connate anthers free or connate around the ovary, connective often prolonged above into a membranous appendage, some or all with a dorsal nectary. Ovary glabrous or pubescent, unilocular with 3(-5) parietal placentae; style simple or lobed. Fruit a loculicidal capsule or a berry. Seeds 2-many, smooth or minutely rugose, often arillate, with endosperm.

A cosmopolitan family of about 23 genera and 800–900 species: 3 genera (all native) and about 30 species (about 16 endemic, 3 naturalized) in Australia. Violaceae are placed in the very large order Malpighiales but the relationships of the family are not clear. They are in a group of families that include Salicaceae and Passifloraceae (see Stevens 2007 & references cited therein).

Key references: Adams & George (1982); Entwisle (1996); James (2000).

External resources: accepted names with synonymy & distribution in Australia (APC); author & publication abbreviations (IPNI); mapping (AVH, NVA); nomenclature (APNI, IPNI).

1. Herbs; flowers markedly zygomorphic; fruit a capsule

1 Viola

1: Shrubs; flowers only slightly zygomorphic; fruit a berry

2 Melicytus

1 VIOLA

Viola L., Sp. Pl. 1: 293 (1753).

Synonymy: Erpetion DC. ex Sweet, The British Flower Garden 2: t. 170 (1826).

Annual, biennial or perennial herbs, glabrous or pubescent. Leaves alternate, in basal rosette or along stem, petiolate; stipules free or adnate to the petiole; lamina orbicular, reniform or lanceolate, almost entire, serrate or crenate, the teeth glandular. Flowers axillary, solitary, on slender scapes (pedicels) bearing 2 small bracteoles, zygomorphic, 5-merous. Sepals entire or minutely toothed-fimbriate, with basal appendages (spurs). Petals spreading, usually white or cream and/or purple; anterior (lowest) petal spurred or saccate at the base; lateral petals often bearded within, rarely glabrous. Staminal filaments short or absent, the connective prolonged above; the two anterior stamens each with a dorsal nectary. Ovary glabrous or pubescent; styles often bent near the base; stigma clubbed, lobed or truncate. Fruit a globose to c. cylindrical capsule, glabrous or pubescent, elastically dehiscing into 3 boat-shaped valves, sometimes explosively, with 2-many seeds.

A genus of about 450 species, mainly in temperate regions; about 13 species (3 introduced) in Australia. Several species are widely cultivated and may self seed and persist in gardens, eg. *V. arvensis* Murray (Field Pansy, see below), *V. odorata* L. (Sweet Violet; Europe, N Africa, Middle East), Pansy (various *V.* spp.) and the native *V. hederacea* (Ivy-leaved Violet, see below).

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1.	Stipules up to 4 cm long, green, deeply lobed; plants annual	1 V. arvensis
1:	Stipules small, brownish, entire or toothed but not deeply lobed; plants perennial	2
2.	Plants lacking stolons, leaves arising from a short erect rootstock; anterior petal with a short basal spur	3
2:	Plants stoloniferous, erect flowering stems not produced; anterior petal \pm saccate at the base but lacking a spur	5
3. 3:	Leaf lamina deeply cordate at the base; flowering stems ascending, up to 30 cm long Leaf lamina with base truncate or shortly cuneate; flowering stems up to 18 cm long	2 V. caleyana 4
4. 4:	Leaf lamina broad-ovate to broad-triangular; corolla 5-8mm long, white with purple vein Leaf lamina oblong or lanceolate; corolla 10-17 mm long, purple, violet or almost white	3 V. cunninghamii 4 V. betonicifolia
5. 5:	Corolla cream, often with a darker tinge towards the centre Corolla blackish-purple to pale violet or discolorous	5 V. cleistogamoides 6
6.	Leaf lamina ovate-rhomboid to broadly ovate, base cuneate, apex obtuse to acute	6 V. sieberiana
6:	Leaf lamina reniform, semicircular or rhomboid, base shallowly cordate or shortly cuneate	7
7. 7:		7 7 V. hederacea 8
7.	cuneate Corolla with petals emarginate or shortly bilobed; lateral petals not bearded	7 V. hederacea

1 * Viola arvensis Murray, Prodr. Stirp. Gott. 73 (1770)

Field Pansy

Illustrations: Entwisle, Fl. Victoria 3: 365, fig. 74a (1996); James, Fl. New South Wales 1, rev. edn: 437 (2000); Richardson et al., Weeds of the South-East, an Identification Guide for Australia 406 (2006).

Annual herb; stems decumbent to erect, to 20 cm high, angular, with an indumentum of short retrorse hairs; lacking stolons. Leaf: stipules pinnatifid, lower lobes linear to oblanceolate, mid-lobe leaf-like; petiole 5–25 mm long; lamina ovate to elliptic, c. 10–50 mm long, base truncate or cuneate, apex obtuse, margins crenate to serrate, sparsely hairy, the hairs short, appressed. Scapes to 8 cm long, longer than leaves, bracteoles in the upper third. Sepals lanceolate, 6–8(–12) mm long, ciliate or glabrous, basal spurs up to 4 mm long in fruit. Petals cream or yellow, often with purple veins, 6–10(–14) mm long; lower petal with a spur up to 4 mm long; lateral petals bearded. Capsule 5–7 mm long. Flowers & fruiting Aug.-Jan.

Tas. (TNS, TSE); also naturalized in NSW, Vic.; native of W Asia, Europe, N Africa. Scattered across northern and eastern Tasmania as a weed of pasture, arable land and gardens. A variable species for which there are a number of subspecies recognised.

2 Viola caleyana D.Don, *Gen. Hist.* 1: 329 (1831)

Swamp Violet

Illustrations: Entwisle, Fl. Victoria 3: 365, fig. 74e (1996); James, Fl. New South Wales 1, rev. edn: 437 (2000).

Perennial herb, usually glabrous; stems weak, straggling or ascending, up to 30 cm long; lacking stolons. Leaf: stipules to 9 mm long, brown, lanceolate, minutely toothed; petiole up to 10 cm long; lamina triangular-ovate





to almost orbicular, 2–5 cm long, margins shallowly crenate, base deeply cordate, upper surface occasionally with scattered short hairs towards the margins. Pedicels usually longer than the leaves, bracteoles at about the middle. Sepals lanceolate, 3–5 mm long, basal spurs up to 1.5 mm long. Petals white, rarely pale violet, 8–10 mm long; lower petal with a short broad spur; lateral petals sometimes sparsely bearded. Capsule 7–10 mm long. Flowering Dec.-Jan.; fruiting Jan.-May.

Tas. (BEL, TNM, TNS, TSE); also NSW, Vic. Rare and scattered across state; found in wetter areas such as stream banks, along drains and among rocks up to 250 m alt.

3 Viola cunninghamii Hook.f., Bot. Antarct. Voy. II. (Fl. Nov.-Zel.) 1: 16 (1852)

Viola cunninghamii var. radicata Hook.f., Bot. Antarct. Voy. II. (Fl. Nov.-Zel.) 1(1): 16 (1852).

Illustration: Kirkpatrick, Alpine Tasmania 98, fig. 43d (1997).

Glabrous perennial herb with a vertical rootstock often branching shortly at the apex; lacking stolons. Leaves tufted; stipules brown, the free portion 3.5–4 mm long, entire or gland-toothed; petioles c. 0.5–6 cm long; lamina broadly ovate to broad triangular, base truncate or shortly cuneate, 4–25 mm long, 3–20 mm wide, margins with 3–5 shallow crenations, the teeth incurved, gland-tipped. Scape 2.5–6cm long, longer than leaves. Sepals 3–5 mm long, the two lowest often broader than the rest, narrow to broad oblong. Petals white with purple veins, 5–8 mm long; lower petal with a short blunt spur; lateral petals sparingly bearded. Capsule 5–8 mm long. Flowering Nov.-Jan.; fruiting ?-Feb.

Tas. (TCH, TSR); also New Zealand. A rare species found at higher elevations, in the Central Highlands, Mt Field, etc, on the margins of creeks and rivers, and in alpine shrubberies and bogs, at 800–1100 m altitude.

4 Viola betonicifolia Sm., Cycl. (Rees) 37, no. 7 (1817) subsp. betonicifolia

Showy Violet

Viola betonicifolia var. longiscapa DC., Prodr. (Candolle) 1: 294 (1824); V. longiscapa (DC.) G.Don, Gen. Hist. 1: 322 (1831). Viola phyteumifolia G.Don, Gen. Hist. 1: 322 (1831) [as V. phyteumaefolia]. Viola betonicaefolia Benth., Fl. Austral. 1: 99 (1863), orth. var.

Illustrations (often as V. betonicifolia): Adams & George, Fl. Australia 8: 90, fig. 25 (1982); Seppelt, Fl. S. Austral. 2: 869, fig. 452a (1986); Entwisle, Fl. Victoria 3: 365, fig. 74d (1996); Kirkpatrick, Alpine Tasmania 98, fig. 43e (1997); Corrick & Fuhrer, Wildflowers of Victoria 235, fig. 819 (2000); Gilfedder et al., The Nature of the Midlands 76 (2003); James, Fl. New South Wales 1, rev. edn: 437 (2000); Whiting et al., Tasmania's Natural Flora 340 (2004).

Glabrous perennial herb, lacking stolons, rootstock short, erect. Leaves tufted in a basal rosette; stipules brown, to 7 mm long, adnate to the petiole, entire or laciniate; petioles (1–)2–15 cm long; lamina 1–6 cm long, 0.8–2.5 cm wide, lanceolate, trullate or occasionally ovate, base cuneate or truncate, apex obtuse, margins shallowly crenate, decurrent down the petiole, lower surface sometimes purplish. Scapes usually longer than the leaves, up to 18 cm long, bracteoles in the lower half. Sepals lanceolate to ovate, 3–6 mm long, the lower 2 often wider than the rest, basal spurs short. Petals purple, violet or almost white, (7–)10–17 mm long; lower petal with short blunt spur; lateral petals bearded. Capsule 7–12 mm long. Flowering Oct.-Mar.; fruiting Dec.-Mar.

Tas. (all regions except MIS); also SA, Qld, NSW, Vic.; also Papua New Guinea. Widespread across the island of Tasmania, mainly in central to eastern areas. Found in damp areas in open forest, grass and heathland, river and stream banks, rocky river beds, near sea level to c. 1200 m alt. The other subspecies, subsp. *novaguineensis* D.M.Moore, occurs in Queensland and Papua New Guinea.

5 Viola cleistogamoides (L.G.Adams) Seppelt, Fl. S. Austral. (ed. 4) 2: 870 (1986)

Viola hederacea subsp. cleistogamoides L.G.Adams, Fl. Australia 8: 386 (1982).





Illustrations: Seppelt, Fl. S. Austral. 2: 869, fig. 452b; 870, fig. 453a (1986); Entwisle, Fl. Victoria 3: 365, fig. 74i (1996); Corrick & Fuhrer, Wildflowers of Victoria 235, fig. 820 (2000); James, Fl. New South Wales 1, rev. edn: 439 (2000).

Glabrous perennial herb; stems short, erect; stolons well developed. Leaves: stipules red-brown, to 3 mm long, glandular-laciniate; petioles narrowly winged, 5–20 mm long; lamina broadly ovate to rhomboid, 5–10(–15) mm long, 4–11 mm wide, base cuneate, apex obtuse, margins with 1–2(–3) coarse rounded incurved teeth. Scapes 5–25(–50) mm long, usually shorter than the leaves, bracteoles above the middle. Sepals lanceolate, 1.6–3.5 mm long, basal spurs small. Petals cream, usually with a brownish or white central streak, 2–2.3(–4) mm long; lower petal c. 1 mm wide, without spur; lateral petals bearded. Capsule 3–5 mm long, seeds ovoid 1–1.5 mm long, blackish at maturity. Flowering Sep.-Dec.; fruiting Sep.-Dec. (Mar.).

Tas. (BEL, FLI, KIN, TCH, TNM, TSE); also SA, NSW, Vic. Found mostly in coastal and near-coastal areas of the eastern half of the state in open forest, heath and sedgelands, stable dunes, frequently in damp situations, near sea level to c. 250 m alt.

6 Viola sieberiana Spreng., Syst. Veg. (Spreng.) 4: 96 (1827)

Viola spathulata Sieber ex Spreng., Syst. Veg. 4(2): Cur. Post. 96 (1827), nom. inval. Erpetion spathulatum G.Don, Gen. Hist. 1: 335 (1831); Viola hederacea var. sieberiana (Spreng.) Domin, Biblioth. Bot. 89(4): 982 (1930); V. hederacea subsp. sieberiana (Spreng.) L.G.Adams, Fl. Australia 8: 387 (1982). Viola sieberi Hook, Companion Bot. Mag. 1: 274 (1836); V. hederacea var. sieberi (Hook.) Hook.f., Bot. Antarct. Voy. Vol. III. (Fl. Tasman.) 1: 26 (1855); V. hederacea var. sieberi (Hook.) W.Becker, Beih. Bot. Centralbl. 266 (1913), nom. illeg., non (Hook.) Hook.f. (1855). Viola spathulata Sieber ex Hook.f., Bot. Antarct. Voy. Vol. III. (Fl. Tasman.) 1: 26 (1855), nom. inval. Viola hederacea subsp. seppeltiana L.G.Adams, Fl. Australia 8: 387 (1982).

Illustrations: Seppelt, *Fl. S. Austral.* 2: 869, fig. 452d; 870, fig. 453a (1986); Entwisle, *Fl. Victoria* 3: 365, fig. 74h (1996); James, *Fl. New South Wales* 1, rev. edn: 438 (2000).

Glabrous perennial herb; stems short; stolons well developed. Leaves tufted: stipules free, linear-lanceolate, 2–3 mm long, minutely and distantly toothed; petioles 4–40 mm long; lamina ovate-rhomboid to broadly ovate, 5–10 mm long, 4–10 mm wide, base cuneate, apex obtuse to acute, margins with 1–3 incurved, gland-tipped teeth. Scapes shorter or longer than the leaves, up to 13 cm long, usually glabrous but occasionally bearing short stout patent hairs, bracteoles at or above the middle. Sepals lanceolate, 2–3.5 mm long, basal spurs short. Petals pale to mid-violet, 4–8 mm long; lower petal not spurred; lateral petals glabrous or bearded. Capsule 4–6 mm long. Flowering & fruiting Oct.-Mar.

Tas. (FLI, TCH, TSE, TSR, TWE); SA, NSW, Vic. Patchy though widespread and found in coastal shrubberies, heath and sedgeland, open woodland, near seal level to 1100 m alt.

7 Viola hederacea Labill., *Nov. Holl. Pl. Spec.* 1: 66, t. 91 (1805)

Ivy-leaved Violet, Ivyleaf Violet

Erpetion hederaceum (Labill.) G.Don, Gen. Hist. 1: 335 (1831); Viola hederacea var. genua Domin, Biblioth. Bot. 89(4): 981 (1930), nom. inval.

Perennial herb, glabrous or puberulous; stems short; stolons well developed. Leaves tufted; stipules usually re-brown, to 5 mm long, free, laciniate; petioles longer than the lamina, 2–8 cm long, glabrous or occasionally with short stiff patent hairs; lamina reniform, ± semicircular or rhomboid, base shortly cuneate, truncate or shallowly cordate, apex obtuse, margins shallowly crenate, 2.5–10 mm long, 2.5–30 mm wide, glabrous or occasionally with short stout hairs, these sparse and ± restricted to the area towards the margins or more rarely dense and evenly distribute. Scape 2.5–9 cm long, usually longer than the leaves, glabrous or with short stiff patent hairs, bracteoles near the middle. Sepals lanceolate, 2.5 mm long, basal spur very short. Petals violet and white, 5.5–10 mm long; anterior petal without a spur; lateral petals bearded. Capsules 4–6 mm long. Flowering & fruiting Oct.-Mar.





Tas. (all regions except MIS); SA, Qld, NSW, Vic.; naturalized in New Zealand. Widespread in a variety of mostly moist habitats from coastal dunes to alpine shrubberies at 1200 m alt.

3 subspecies are currently recognised though the species is in need of further revision (see also Adams & George 1982; Seppelt 1986; Entwisle 1996; James 2000). The name *V. hederacea* var. *petiolaris* DC. (basionym of *Erpetion petiolare* (DC.) G.Don) is based on Tasmanian material but the name can not be applied (see Adams & George 1982, p. 100).

1. Lateral petals bearded inside near upper edge (widespread)

7a subsp. hederacea

1: Lateral petals glabrous (Mt Field NP)

7b subsp. curtisiae

7a Viola hederacea Labill. subsp. hederacea

Ivy-leaved Violet, Ivyleaf Violet

Illustrations (often as *V. hederacea*): Seppelt, *Fl. S. Austral.* 2: 869, fig. 452c; 870, fig. 453b (1986); Entwisle, *Fl. Victoria* 3: 365, fig. 74f-g (1996); Cameron, *A Guide to Flowers and Plants of Tasmania*, 3rd edn, 83, pl. 195 (2000); Corrick & Fuhrer, *Wildflowers of Victoria* 236, fig. 821 (2000); James, *Fl. New South Wales* 1, rev. edn: 437–438 (2000); Kirkpatrick, *Alpine Tasmania* 98, fig. 43b (1997); Woolmore et al., *King Island Flora* 79 (2002); Gilfedder et al., *The Nature of the Midlands* 76 (2003); Whiting et al., *Tasmania's Natural Flora* 341 (2004); Richardson et al., *Weeds of the South-East, an Identification Guide for Australia* 406 (2006); Simmons et al., *A Guide to Flowers and Plants of Tasmania*, 4th edn, 129 (2008).

Leaf lamina ovate to reniform. Flower scapes longer than leaves. Corolla markedly discolorous, pale with darker violet blotches, 7–10 mm long; lateral petals entire, bearded. Flowering & fruting Oct.-Mar.

Tas. (all regions except MIS); also SA, Qld, NSW, Vic. A widespread subspecies found in a wide variety of habitats including eucalyptus woodland and forest, heath, along stream banks in rainforest, sand dune communities etc.

7b Viola hederacea subsp. curtisiae L.G.Adams, Fl. Australia 8: 386 (1982) Curtis' Violet, Winifred's Violet

Leaf lamina broadly ovate to ovate-rhomboid (becoming rather cordate in shade). Flower scapes 1–1.5 cm long, about as long as leaves. Corolla concolorous or discolorous, blue-violet; petals 5–6 mm long, all emarginate or bilobed, glabrous. Flowering & fruiting Jan.-Feb.

Tas. (TSR); endemic?; also Vic.? Known only from subalpine woodland at Mt Field National Park at an altitude of c. 1050 m alt. This subspecies is similar to a form found in Victoria on the Baw Baw Plateau Entwisle (1996), and Seppelt (pers. comm.) considers it to be widespread on at least the Bogong High Plains (Vic.). Further research is required to determine the distribution and taxonomic circumscription of this subspecies.

8 Viola fuscoviolacea (L.G.Adams) T.A.James, *Muelleria* 9: 35 (1996)

Viola hederacea subsp. fuscoviolacacea L.G.Adams, Fl. Australia 8: 386 (1982).

Illustrations: Entwisle, Fl. Victoria 3: 369, fig. 75a (1996); James, Fl. New South Wales 1, rev. edn: 438 (2000), as V. sp. A.

Perennial herb; stems short; stolons well developed. Leaves tufted; stipules red-brown, free, 1–2 mm long, linear-lanceolate, laciniate; petioles 8–20 mm long; lamina broadly ovate to ovate-rhomboid, 3–6 mm long, 3–8 mm wide, occasionally with scattered short stiff hairs, base cuneate to truncate, apex obtuse, margins shallowly crenate, the teeth incurved, gland-tipped. Scapes usually shorter than the leaves, glabrous or with short stiff patent hairs, bracteoles below the middle. Sepals lanceolate, 1.5–2 mm long, acute, basal spurs short. Petals dark violet in the bud, often paler at maturity, 2–4 mm long; lower petal lacking a spur; lateral petals bearded, sometimes very sparsely. Capsule 4–6mm long. Flowering & fruiting Oct.-Mar.

Tas. (BEL, FLI, TCH, TSE, TSR, TWE); NSW, Vic. Widespread and found on stream, river and lake margins, damp areas in grass and sedgeland, gravely and sandy soils, near sea level to 1080 m alt.





2 MELICYTUS

Melicytus J.R.Forst & G.Forst., Char. Gen. Pl. 1: 123, t. 62 (1775).

Synonymy: Hymenanthera R.Br., Narr. Exped. Zaire 442 (1818).

Shrubs or small trees, glabrous. Leaves alternate, frequently clustered on short lateral branches, petiolate; stipules minute, caducous; lamina linear to oblong to narrowly obovate, entire or toothed. Flowers axillary, solitary or in clusters, bisexual or unisexual, slightly irregular, 5-merous. Sepals shortly united at the base. Petals \pm equal, yellow (in Australia). Staminal filaments united above, connective ending in a scarious, often toothed, appendage and with a dorsal nectary. Carpels 2–3, joined; style short, simple; stigma 2–3 lobed. Fruit a small globular berry with 1–4 seeds.

A genus of 10 species in Australia, New Zealand and Norfolk Island; 1 species in Australia.

1 Melicytus dentatus (R.Br. ex DC.) Molloy & Mabb., Curtis's Bot. Mag. 17: 234 (2000)

Tree Violet

Hymenanthera dentata R.Br. ex DC., Prodr. (DC.) 1: 315 (1824). Hymenanthera angustifolia R.Br. ex DC., Prodr. (DC.) 1: 315 (1824); H. dentata var. angustifolia (R.Br. ex DC.) Benth., Fl. Austral. 1: 105 (1863); H. banksii F.Muell., Pl. Victoria 1: 69 (1862), nom. superfl; H. banksii var. angustifolia Stirling, Trans. & Proc. Bot. Soc. Edinburgh 22: 350 (1905); Melicytus angustifolius (R.Br. ex DC.) Garn.-Jones, New Zealand J. Bot. 25: 127 (1987).

Illustrations (often as H. dentata): Seppelt, Fl. S. Austral. 2: 867, fig. 451d (1986); Tonkinson, Fl. Victoria 3: 369, fig. 75f-i (1996); Corrick & Fuhrer, Wildflowers of Victoria 235, fig. 818 (2000); James, Fl. New South Wales 1, rev. edn: 440 (2000); Whiting et al., Tasmania's Natural Flora 340 (2004).

A rigid, much-branched shrub to 2(–3?) m high; lateral branches often ending in a stout spine. Leaves alternate, scattered or clustered on short lateral branches; stipules ovate, c. 0.5mm long; lamina entire or rarely shallowly lobed or toothed, oblong to oblanceolate, apex obtuse, 4–40 mm long, 2–4 mm wide. Flowers axillary, solitary or 2–3 together; pedicels 2–5 mm long, recurved with 2 minute bracteoles at about the mid-point. Sepals tinged grey or purplish, 1.5–2.5 mm long, orbicular-ovate, margins minutely fringed. Petals pale yellow, 3–5 mm long, recurved above. Fruit a subglobular to ovoid berry, 4.5–6 mm long, purple, white or white blotched with green or purple. Seeds (1)2(3), when 2 ovoid, deeply plano-convex, brown to blackish at maturity. Flowering Sep.-Mar.; fruiting Oct.-Apr.

Tas. (BEL, FLI?, TCH, TNM, TSE, TSR, TWE?); also SA, Qld, NSW, Vic. A widespread species usually found in dry areas under light forest or woodland or along river banks; in developed areas often found on fence lines. At lower altitudes it is a dense rounded shrub with intermeshed branches, at higher altitudes (up to 1400 m alt.) it often appressed to boulders with leaves 1 cm long or less.

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NOTE: Web addresses can and do change: a list of current web addresses will be maintained on the *Flora of Tasmania Online* website [www.tmag.tas.gov.au/floratasmania].

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