

## Review of *Cephalanthus* (Rubiaceae), with the segregation of the new African genus *Sylvainia*

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The genus *Cephalanthus* belongs to the tribe Naucleae along with 26 other genera. Members of *Cephalanthus* grow mainly in temperate and subtropical wetlands in the Americas and Asia, but there is a single African species that is associated with forest margins and rocky outcrops in humid temperate grasslands. The genus comprises six species with a markedly disjunct distribution: three species are from the Americas: *C. glabratus*, *C. occidentalis*, and *C. salicifolius*; two species are from tropical Asia: *C. angustifolius* and *C. tetrandrus*, and one species is from tropical Africa: *C. natalensis*. Recent molecular phylogenetic studies have supported the monophyly of the genus, however, most morphological synapomorphies are absent in the single African species, which is sister to the remaining species of the genus. The aim of this paper is to provide a brief taxonomic revision of the genus *Cephalanthus*, considering previously undervalued or unconsidered morphological aspects, and to describe a new monospecific genus based on comparative morphological analyses. Vegetative and reproductive material of all *Cephalanthus* species was analysed following conventional taxonomic techniques. We transferred *C. natalensis* to a new genus, *Sylvainia*, taking into account the morphological similarities and differences between *Cephalanthus* and the new genus. *Cephalanthus glabrifolius*, a little-known species previously considered synonymous with *C. tetrandrus*, is resurrected as a valid species, bringing the number of *Cephalanthus* species back to six. The subtribe Cephalanthinae now has two genera, its type *Cephalanthus* with six species, and a new monospecific genus *Sylvainia* endemic to southeastern Africa. Based on the modified description of *Cephalanthus*, now absent from Africa, the generic concept is substantially modified, being now represented by three American and three Asian species.