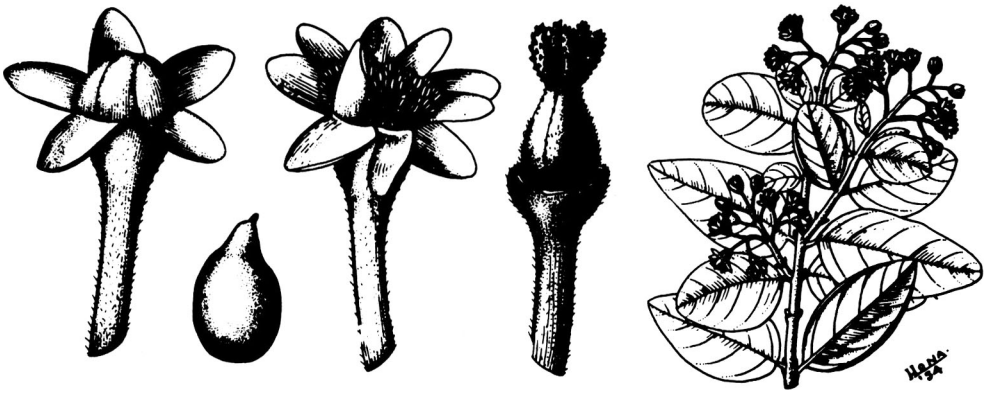
261. *PEUMUS BOLDUS* Molina (MONIMIACEAE) — Boldo



Leaves sometimes consumed as a medicinal tea in South America. The fruits are said to be eaten and leaves used as a spice in Chile. Bark used for tanning and dyeing fibers. Shredded young twigs and bark are boiled in 25 ℓ of water for 1 ℓ of wool or fiber (with *Persea*) to dye it yellow.[255] Wood used for charcoal. Though used as a unique fragrance compound, the oil and/or absolute of the leaves is not very popular.

The aromatic leaves are used as a mild diuretic, especially in liver ailments like jaundice. Said, also, to be anodyne, antiseptic, choleretic, hepatotonic, hypnotic, stimulant, tonic, and vermifuge. Used for urogenital inflammations, like gonorrhea, in Latin America. Elsewhere it is used for dyspepsia, gout, hepatosis, rheumatism, syphilis, and worms.[32,33] An infusion of fragrant leaves is taken for stomach and liver troubles.[9] Chileans "cure earaches" with the sap of the leaves. One or two small leaves in hot water, taken occasionally for liver ailment. Three shredded bark flakes with laurel twigs and burned surga (or toasted salt) used for stomach (south of Chile, Mapuche Indians). Bark mixed with picapica for cough.[255] Leaves, bruised and half roasted and sprayed with wine, are used to treat running sores and head colds. Warm baths with the leaf decoction are highly recommended for dropsy and rheumatism.[256]

The genus *Peumus* is reported to contain the toxins pachycarpine and terpineol. Leaves are said to contain the alkaloid boldine. Sparteine is also reported. The essential oil (2% of leaf) is stated to be chemically related to oil of *Chenopodium*. Grieve also lists the glucosides boldin or boldoglucin.[2] Ascaridol and flavonoids are also reported. Bruns and Kohler[257] found that the essential oil of boldo contained alpha-pinene (4.0%), camphene (0.6%), beta-pinene (0.8%), sabinene (0.8%), α-3-carene (0.5%), terpinolene (0.4%), limonene (1.6%), 1.8-cineole (16.0%), gamma-terpinene (1.0%), *p*-cymene (28.6%), 2-nonanone (0.4%), fenchone (0.8%), 1-methyl-4-isopropenyl-benzene (0.3%), camphor (0.6%), linalool (9.1%), bonyl acetate (0.2%), alpha-fenchol (0.09%), terpinen-4-ol (2.6%), alpha-terpineol (0.9%), cuminaldehyde (0.3%), farnesol — no isomer given (0.4%), ascaridol (16.1%), alpha-methyl ionone (0.4%), methyl eugenol (0.5%), alpha-hexyl cinnamaldehyde (0.4%), diethyl phthalate (0.3%), coumarin (0.5%), and benzyl benzoate (0.4%) (trace amounts of 2-tridecanone, beta-iso-methyl ionine, 2-heptanone, 2-octanone, 2-decanone, benzaldehyde, 2-undecanone, and myrtenal). According to Lawrence,[31] that "Burns and Kohler[257] found alpha-hexyl cinnamaldehyde and diethyl pthalate naturally occurring is very unlikely." He thought it more likely that the authors obtained adulterated oil from a commercial house. "The authors should know that it is not nice to fool mother nature."[31]

Toxicity — I would rank this, if forced to, as, perhaps, more poisonous than coffee or tea, but I would not be afraid to drink a tea made from the leaves. Many of the compounds