

Viscaceae mistletoe family

Primarily tropical, there are 350 species worldwide but Nova Scotia hosts a single species. All are parasitic, with reduced opposite leaves, and unisexual flowers. Staminate perianth is five-lobed, while the pistillate perianth is bilobed, although the ovary may have 3–4 carpels. Fruit is a shiny berry containing a single seed.

***Arceuthobium* M. Bieb.** **dwarf mistletoe**

North American in scope, there are 28 species included. Dioecious plants, their tiny flowers are solitary or in small clusters in the axils of scalelike leaves. Flowers are as described above. The fruit is pedicellate.

***Arceuthobium pusillum* Peck** **Eastern Dwarf Mistletoe; faux-gui nain**



Photo by Sean Blaney

A tiny shrub that parasitizes spruce trees, it buries its stems within the cambium of the host tree. Plants are brown or purple, the leaves reduced to scales. Flowers are borne on curved pedicels, each producing a single berry.

Flowers April to June.

Parasitic on the branches of spruce trees. Especially common in coastal black spruce forests.

Along the Atlantic from Yarmouth to Cape Breton; common. Scattered inland and north along the Minas Basin to the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Ranges from NF to SK, south to PA and MN.