

Tuesday, July 21, 2026

Aristolochia baetica

Scientific name: *Aristolochia baetica* L.

Family: *Aristolochiaceae*

Common name: Andalusian Dutchman's Pipe, Birthwort, Pipe Vine

We're talking about a plant native to our region, since *Aristolochia* is native to Spain and Portugal—hence the species name *baetica*, derived from *Bética*. The genus name comes from Greek: *aristos* means “excellent,” and *lochia* refers to childbirth, because some of these species were historically used in obstetrics to induce labor.

It is a shrub with slender, climbing stems and heart-shaped evergreen leaves. The flowers are very distinctive, a very dark purple-brown color, with an “S”-shaped curved tube that is swollen at the base, making them resemble small oil lamps. They have six fused stamens. They grow singly and can measure between 2 and 8 cm in length. *Aristolochia* is found in scrublands and understory throughout the southern Iberian Peninsula, the Levante region, and northern Morocco. It is pollinated by insects attracted by its distinctive aroma. The male and female parts of the flower never mature at the same time, thus preventing self-fertilization.

The active compounds it contains—especially in the root—have led to its use as a remedy for fever and as an emmenagogue, meaning it induces menstruation. In La Concepción, it can be found along the Ruta de los Miradores.

