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Abstract

A review. This review presents the phytochem. constituents of the genus Plectranthus reported up to 1999. Only a tetrameric deriv. of caffeic acid was isolated from P. japonicus, but a group of long-chain alkylphenols, of possible taxonomic significance in the genus, was also isolated. As a genus of the subfamily Nepetoideae, Plectranthus is free from iridoid glycosides and rich in essential oil (i.e. > 0.5% volatile oil on a dry wt. basis). Diterpenoids are the more common secondary metabolites in Plectranthus. The majority of them are highly modified abietanoids. This seems to be similar to the pattern of diterpenoids obsd. for Salvia, but no clerodane diterpenoids were found in Plectranthus.