

## Taxonomic note on the undescribed fruits of *Cinnamomum riparium* Gamble (Lauraceae)

Remya Krishnan RV<sup>1\*</sup>, Santhosh Kumar ES<sup>2</sup>, Radhamany PM<sup>3</sup>, Valsaladevi G<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,3,4</sup> Department of Botany, University of Kerala, Kariavattom, Kerala, India

<sup>2</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute, Palode, Karimankode, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India

### Abstract

The fruits of the riparian species, *Cinnamomum riparium* Gamble remain undescribed so far. The fruit has great taxonomic significance and hence aiding proper identification of the species. It was freshly collected from Athirapally and Palode and described and illustrated here. The fruits are ellipsoid truncate and showed significant difference from the allied species *C. heyneanum*.

**Keywords:** *Cinnamomum riparium* Gamble, Lauraceae, *C. heyneanum*

### Introduction

Gamble <sup>[1]</sup> described *Cinnamomum riparium* based on collections of T.F. Bourdillon (Bourdillon, 710, 1573, K!), Col. R.H. Beddome (Beddome, s.n.) and C. A. Barber (Barber, 4103, 5852) from the erstwhile Travancore. It is a riparian species usually seen along the bank of rivers. Kostermans <sup>[2]</sup> included this species based on these pretty old collections in his treatise on south Indian *Cinnamomum*. However, the fruit of this taxon was neither described in the protologue nor by any subsequent collectors till to date. The present authors could collect this plant in fruits from Athirapally, Thrissur and described below in detail to facilitate its easy identification.

*Cinnamomum riparium* Gamble in Kew Bull.1925:128; Fl.

Madras 1224.1925; Kostermans, Bull. Bot. Surv. India 25 (1-4): 114. 1983. [Fig.1]

Small trees. Leaves opposite and sub-opposite, lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, to 10 x 3 cm, tapered at both ends. Inflorescence axillary and pseudo-terminal, rather few to many flowered, lax, upto 8 cm long. Flowers 5 mm long, perianth tube cup shaped; tepals oblong, acute at apex, 3-4 mm long. Stamens ca. 2.5 mm long; anthers 4-celled. Ovary ellipsoid; stigma minute. In fructescence to 4.2 – 5 cm long; peduncle branched, to 2.5 – 3 cm long. Fruit ellipsoid, smooth, to 15 x 9 mm, truncate at apex, purplish-black at maturity; fruiting pedicel obconical, to 10 mm long, glabrous; cupule shallow, 0.4-0.5 cm long, tepals persistent, glabrous. Seed 1, ellipsoid.

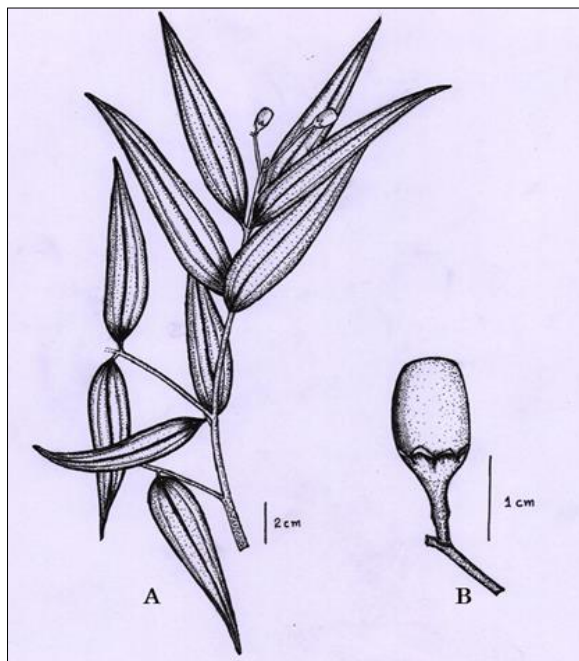


Fig 1

**Flowering and Fruiting:** January- March.

**Specimen Examined:** INDIA, Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram dist.: Palode, ±109 m, 03 December 2013, *Remya Krishnan* 6923 (KUBH!); Thrissur dist.: Athirapally, ± 200 m. 04 March 2015 *Remya Krishnan* 8301; 30 December 2015, *Remya Krishnan* 8313 & 8324 (KUBH!).

**Note**

*Cinnamomum riparium* is closely similar to *C. heyneanum* Nees, but differs mainly by the glabrous and smooth branchlets, coriaceous leaves, paniculate inflorescence and the elliptic fruits with truncate apex. Whereas in *C. heyneanum*, the terminal branchlets are minutely grey tomentellous, leaves are chartaceous, inflorescence consist of a 3-5 flowered cyme and the fruits are ellipsoidal with pointed apex and tepals flaring apart in the cupule.

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**References**

1. Gamble JS. New Lauraceae of Southern India. Kew Bulletin, 1925, 126-132.
2. Kostermans AJGH. The South Indian species of *Cinnamomum* Schaeffer (Lauraceae). Bulletin Botanical Survey of India. 1983; 25:90-133.