



RESEARCH COMMUNICATION

A new combination in Indian *Litsea* Lam. (Lauraceae)

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Abstract

A new combination, *Litsea wightii* (Nees) Chakrab., Anand Kumar & Ghoshal is proposed based on *Tetranthera wightii* Nees. The name is also lectotypified.

Keywords

Taxonomy; lectotypification; new combination; *Tetranthera*; peninsular India

Introduction

In 1836, Nees von Esenbeck (1) described a species, *Tetranthera wightii* Nees based on a gathering by Robert Wight from peninsular India. He differentiated it from *T. coriacea* B. Heyne ex Nees by some characters of the leaves. Unfortunately, this name remained unnoticed to J.D. Hooker (2). In fact, there is no mention of this species in any subsequent Flora dealing with peninsular India. Even the recent revision of the family Lauraceae in India (3) has not treated this name. POWO (4) erroneously cited this name as a synonym of *Litsea wightiana* (Nees) Hook.f. Our ongoing studies on the Indian *Litsea* Lam. revealed that *T. wightii* is morphologically closely allied to the peninsular Indian endemic *Litsea coriacea* (B. Heyne ex Nees) Hook.f. by the sessile to subsessile umbels borne in clusters in the leaf axils and on branchlets and similar fruits but clearly differing from it in the glabrous branchlets and leaves; the latter being rounded to obtuse or apiculate at apex and with 5–6 pairs of lateral nerves not as in *L. coriacea* having hairy branchlets and the leaves hairy on the undersurface which are apiculate to acuminate at apex and with 6–10 pairs of lateral nerves. According to Kok (5), the nature of indumentum and presence or absence of hairs on various plant parts in *Litsea* are of good diagnostic value. For example, *L. glabrata* (Wall ex Nees) Hook.f. differs from *L. wightiana* only by the glabrous branchlets and leaves. Thus, the above differences appear to be sufficient to warrant treating *T. wightii* as a distinct species under *Litsea*, as given below. Further, Nees (1) did not designate a type for his name and therefore the duplicates of the specimen cited by him are syntypes. Hence, a lectotype is also designated here based on a specimen available at the Nees's herbarium, GZU.

New combination and typification

Litsea wightii (Nees) Chakrab., Anand Kumar & Ghoshal, comb. nov.

Basionym: *Tetranthera wightii* Nees, Syst. Laur. 523. 1836.

Type (lectotype designated here): India, Tamil Nadu, Tirunelveli dist., Courtallum, s.d., R. Wight 2/A [= 2454] (GZU000254563, digital image!, Fig. 1; isolectotype E00393268, digital image!).

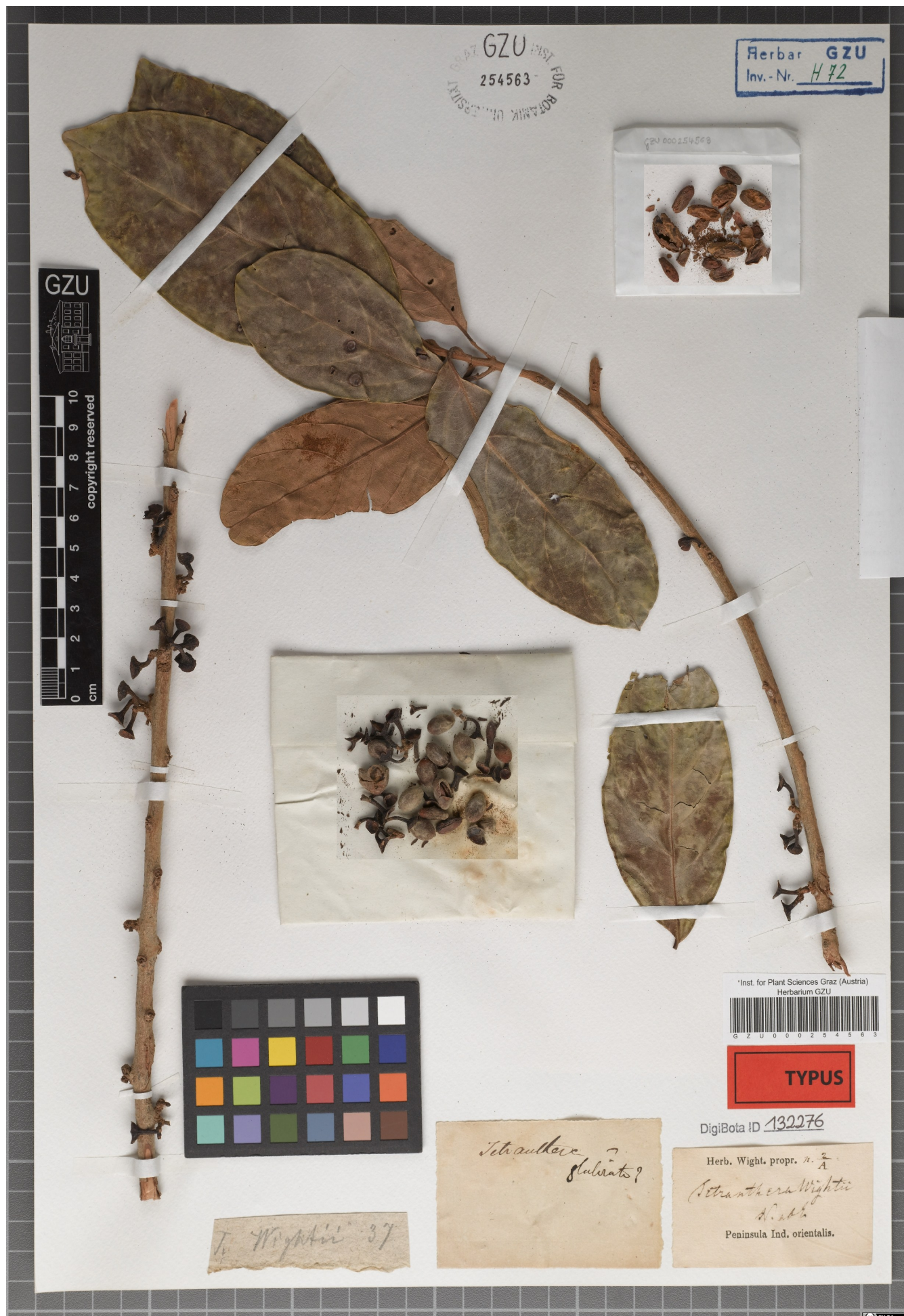


Fig. 1. Lectotype of *Tetranthera wightii* (GZU000254563).

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Authors' contributions

All authors have equally contributed to the planning of the research and preparation of manuscript.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest: The authors declared that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical issues: None

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