



RESEARCH COMMUNICATION

Phyllanthus roeperianus (Phyllanthaceae) is not conspecific with *P. cochinchinensis*

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Abstract

Phyllanthus roeperianus Wall. ex Müll.Arg. is re-instated to specific rank from the synonymy of *P. cochinchinensis* Spreng.

Keywords

Indo-Burmese region; Phyllanthaceae; *Phyllanthus*; re-instatement

Introduction

The genus *Phyllanthus* L. comprises of 750-1200 species, distributed in the tropical and subtropical regions of the World (1). POWO listed 1065 accepted species (2). Recently Bouman *et al.* segregated *Phyllanthus* into ten genera based on phylogenetic studies (3). However, this concept still needs wide consensus. Till then, it is better to recognize *Phyllanthus* as per its conventional treatment in the broad sense.

Chakrabarty & Balakrishnan treated *Phyllanthus roeperianus* Wall. ex Müll. Arg., described from Sylhet in Bangladesh, as a distinct species, now known to occur also in Northeast India and Myanmar (1). POWO also supports this view (2). However, very recently Kempriai *et al.* synonymized this species under the Indo-Chinese element *P. cochinchinensis* Spreng. (distributed in Cambodia, China Hainan, Laos, Taiwan and Vietnam) which necessitated the present communication. Unfortunately, the paper by Kempriai *et al.* is marred by inaccuracies (4). For example, they presented a comparative table justifying the said merger wherein they compared *P. roeperianus* with two other species (*Cathetus fasciculata* and *P. cochinchinensis*) which are homotypic synonyms! Furthermore, the characters given in the table are incorrect and possibly based on literature. Even the lectotype of *Cathetus fasciculata* Lour. designated by them is ineffective and superfluous. The present studies on the materials of both *P. roeperianus* and *P. cochinchinensis* covering the entire range of distribution of these species reveal that both are different and distinct species (Table 1), not to be confused and considered as conspecific. The nomenclature and typification of the taxa under discussion are elucidated below.

Taxonomy

Phyllanthus cochinchinensis Spreng., Syst. Veg., ed. 16, 3: 21. 1826. - *Cathetus fasciculata* Lour., Fl. Cochinch. 2: 608. 1790, non *Phyllanthus fasciculatus* Poir., 1804. - *Phyllanthus fasciculatus* (Lour.) Müll.Arg. in DC., Prodr. 15(2): 350. 1866, nom. illeg. - *Diasperus cochinchinensis* (Spreng.) Kuntze, Revis. Gen. Pl. 2: 599. 1891.

Type (lectotype designated by Chakrabarty & Balakrishnan [1], p. 364): Vietnam [Cochinchina], s.d., *J. de Loureiro* s.n. (BM000951422, image!). Additional original

Table 1. Comparison between *Phyllanthus cochinchinensis* and *P. roeperianus*

Character	<i>P. cochinchinensis</i>	<i>P. roeperianus</i>
Leaves	Obovate, obovate-oblong to spatulate, obtuse, rounded, truncate to emarginate at apex; lateral nerves 4-7 pairs	Linear-oblong, narrowly oblong to oblanceolate or sometimes lanceolate, acute or mucronate at apex; lateral nerves 7-10 pairs
Bracts	Densely hairy	Glabrous
Fruits	4-5 mm in diameter	2-2.5 mm in diameter

material: Vietnam [Cochinchina], s.d., *J. de Loureiro s.n.* (BM000951421, image!).

= *Phyllanthus cinerascens* Hook. & Arn., Bot. Beechey Voy. 211. 1837.

Type: China, Without locality and date, *C. Millett s.n.* (holotype K001056666, image!).

Notes: The lectotype of *Cathetus fasciculata* designated by Kempf et al. (4) stands ineffective.

Phyllanthus roeperianus Wall. ex Müll.Arg. in Linnaea 32: 28. 1863. - *Cathetus roeperianus* (Wall. ex Müll.Arg.) Chakrab. & N.P. Balakr. in J. Econ. Taxon. Bot. 46: 43. 2022.

Type (lectotype designated by Chakrabarty & Balakrishnan [1], p. 356): Bangladesh, Sylhet, s.d., *N. Wallich* Numer. List No. 7904 (G-DC barcode G00324785, image!, Fig. 1; isolectotypes CAL0000022637!, E00314317, G00434931, K001128482, K000246567, K000246569, images!).

= *Phyllanthus roeperianus* var. *parvifolius* Müll.Arg. in DC., Prodr. 15(2): 385. 1866.

Type: India, Meghalaya, Khasi Hills, 1861, *J.D. Hooker & T. Thomson s.n.* (holotype G00324784, image!; isotype CAL, herb. acc. no. 402202 - without barcode!).

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Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interest.

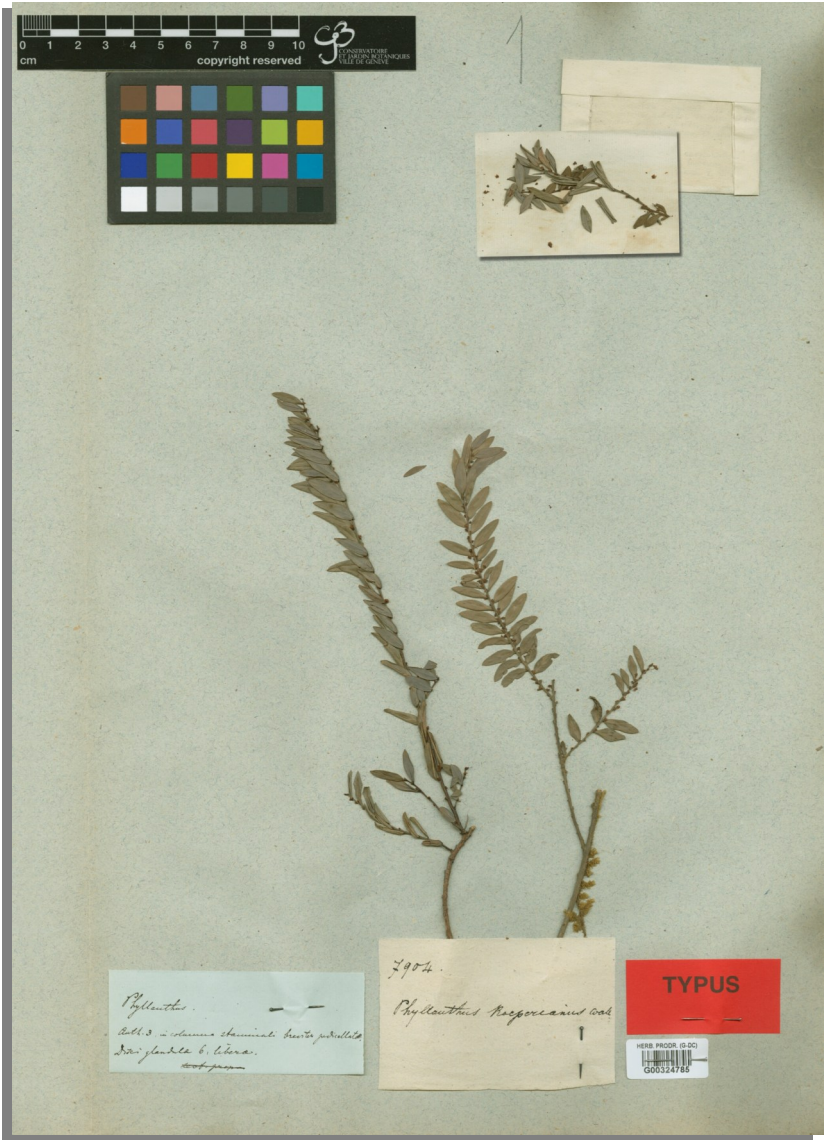


Fig. 1. Lectotype of *Phyllanthus roeperianus* (G00324785) © Conservatoire et Jardin botaniques de la Ville de Genève.

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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