



Dillenia suffruticosa (Griffith) Martelli (Dilleniaceae) : A new addition to Indian Flora

Murthy G.V.S.



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Dillenia suffruticosa (Griffith) Martelli (Dilleniaceae), a new addition to Indian Flora

G.V.S. Murthy

Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore 641 003, India

Abstract

Dillenia suffruticosa (Griffith) Martelli from Kerala is described and discussed its occurrence.

INTRODUCTION

The author while verifying the materials in the Madras Herbarium for the preparation of the Flora of Kerala, came across two specimens labelled as *Dillenia retusa* Thw. collected from Konni Reserve Forest in Kerala. These specimens actually belongs to *D. suffruticosa* (Griffith) Martelli and are strikingly different from *D. retusa* in having the leaf decurrent into stipules (petiolar wings), nervation of the wings not sharply separated from that of the blade, base of the petiole completely amplexicaul, flowers yellow and shorter outer staminodes and longer inner stamens.

Dillenia suffruticosa is known to occur in Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Philippines (Hoogland, 1952; Hooker & Thomson, 1872). The collection of *D. suffruticosa* by Mohanan in 1980 from Konni Reserve Forest, a tropical wet evergreen type, and not being reported in the Quilon district flora (Mohanan, 1984), Pathanamthitta district flora (Anil Kumar, 1994) and Flora of India (Majumdar, 1993) raised doubt about its occurrence and origin. Survey of literature revealed that prior to Mohanan's collection, in India *D. suffruticosa* was grown in Botanic Garden, Calcutta and Victoria Garden, Bombay (see Hoogland, 1952). Looking for similar specimens at FRC, author found a collection made by T.S. Somasundaram in 1967 from Konni Forest Rest House compound. This gave clue to Mohanan's collection (69315, MH), the first record of this species outside garden, that *D. suffruticosa* must have been escaped from the Konni Forest Rest House compound and by 1980 naturalised and confined to certain locality(ies) in the Konni forest. For the benefit of future workers the description of *D. suffruticosa* based on that of Hoogland (1952) is given below.

Dillenia suffruticosa (Griffith) Martelli in Becc., Malesia 3: 163. 1886; Hoogland, Fl. Mal. I, 4: 162. 1951 & Blumea 7: 70. 1952. *Wormia suffruticosa* Griffith, Notul. Pl. Asiat. 4: 70. 1854 & Icon. Pl. Asiat. t. 649. 1854; Hook. f. & Thomson, Fl. Brit. India 1: 35. 1872 (Fig. 1).

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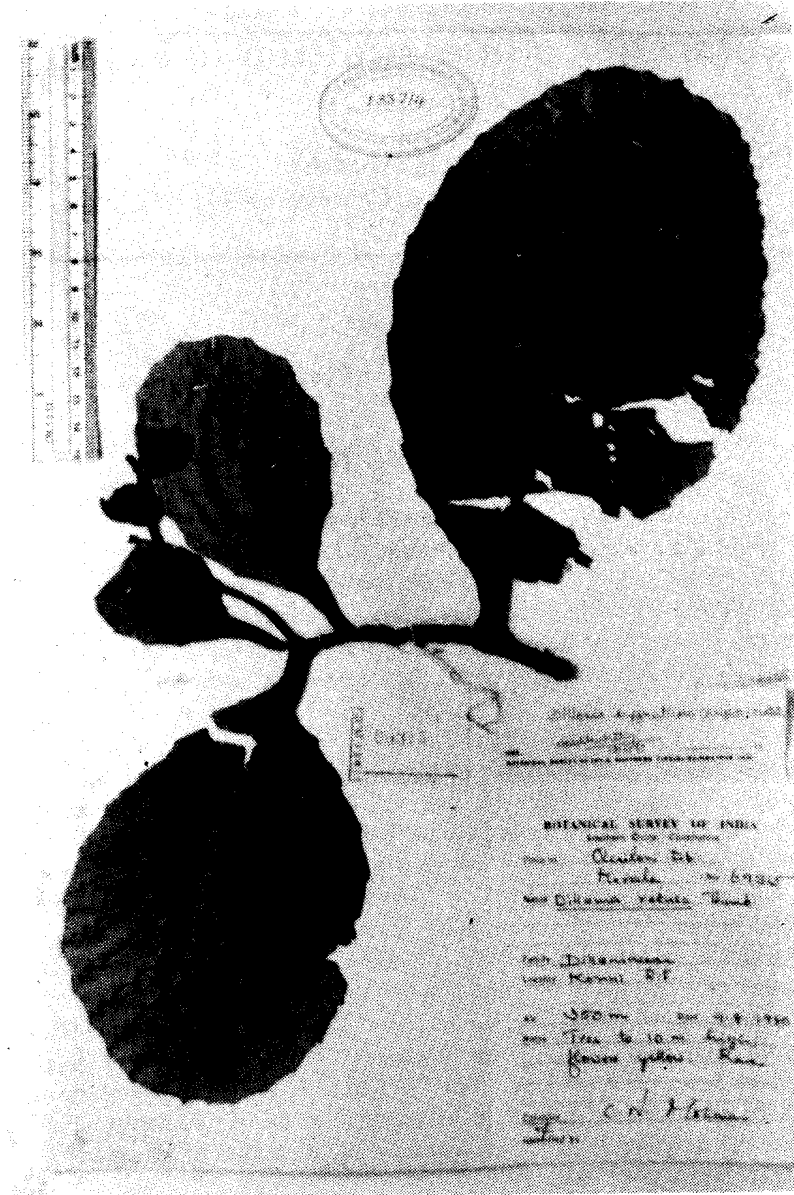


Fig. 1. *Dillenia suffruticosa* (Griffith) Martelli (Mohan 69315, MH).

Dillenia suffruticosa, a new addition to Indian Flora

Large shrubs or small trees, evergreen, up to 10 m high. Branches sympodial, glabrous to densely villous with 2-3 mm long hairs, more or less glabrescent. Leaf-scars amplexicaul, for about 1/2 single line, or subfalcate with *ca.* 20 leaf-traces near lower margin. Leaves elliptic-ovate (10-) 15-25 (-45) x (5) 8-12 (-26) cm, with (7-)12-20 (-27) nerves on either side; rounded to obtuse at apex, obtuse at base, decurring into petiolar wings; margin entire to dentate or doubly dentate, nerves ending in apex of teeth, in larger leaves often 1-3 rather strong secondary nerves directed downward near margin, ending in apex of smaller teeth; glabrous, rarely slightly villose on intervenium in younger leaves only above, slightly to densely villose on nerves, on both sides along midrib (continuing on petiole), and along line which delimits bud-enclosing part of leaf-base beneath. Petiole 2-6 cm, with amplexicaul wings; wings 4-10 (-15) mm broad, nervation of blade continuing, but less marked, on wings, wings and base of blade below line where both sides cohere in young leaf of different colour (darker when dry); wings usually persistent. Inflorescences terminal, leaf-opposed (1-)6-10(-18)-flowered upto 30 cm long, simple racemes or compound; axis *ca.* 3 mm thick, glabrous to densely villose; bracts caducous, triangular, 6-15 x 3-5 mm. Flowers 8-12 cm across. Pedicel 0.8-3 cm long, 2-3 mm thick, thickened to 3-4 mm at apex, without bracteoles. Sepals 5, obovate, 15-22 x 8-12 mm, glabrous inside, glabrous too rather densely villose outside. Petals 5, bright yellow, obovate, 40-50 x 25-30 mm, rounded at apex, narrowed towards base. Androecium with distinct group of staminodes on outer side. Staminodes *ca.* 100, linear, *ca.* 4-6 x 0.3 mm, yellow, obtuse at apex. Stamens *ca.* 175, outermost ones slightly curved in bud, *ca.* 8 mm long, innermost ones with apical part reflexed outward in bud, *ca.* 13 mm long, with stamens of intermediate lengths between; anther *ca.* 0.5 mm broad, obtuse at apex; thecae linear, opening with pore near apex on outside. Carpels 5-8, usually 7, arranged around sharp conical receptacle, light green, elliptic, *ca.* 5 x 2 mm, glabrous, each with 7-10 ovules; styles spreading, filamentous, *ca.* 10 mm long, 0.5 mm thick, yellowish white. Pseudocarp dehiscent, when ripe sepals spreading, enlarged to 18-25 x 10-15 mm; carpels red, 20-25 x 10-16 mm, each with 1-4 seeds. Seeds obovoid, *ca.* 3 x 2 mm, brown or black, enclosed by scarlet, membranous aril.

Specimens examined: Kerala: Quilon, Konni R.F., 9.8.1980, Mohanan 69315 (MH); Konni Forest Rest House Compound, Jan. 1967, Somasundaram 2734 (FRC).

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