

Combretum indicum

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Description ^{1,2}

Climbing shrub. Leaves oblong-lanceolate to elliptic, acuminate, *the petiole bases persistent and thorn-like*. Flowers fragrant in terminal drooping spikes. *Calyx tube c. 8 cm long*; lobes short, triangular. Petals white, becoming red. Fruit narrowly ellipsoid, 5-angled.

Miscellaneous details ³

"Notes: Grown in gardens, Native of Asia"

Worldwide distribution ^{1,2}

Burma, Malaya, New Guinea and Philippines.

Description ^{4,5}

Lianas to 8 m tall. Branchlets brownish yellow pubescent. Petiole 5-9 mm, without an inflated joint near base, densely brown pilose when young; leaf blade mostly oblong-elliptic or elliptic, 5-18 × 2.5-7 cm, abaxially sometimes brown pilose, adaxially glabrous except slightly brown pilose on midvein, finely white verruculose, rarely tomentose on both surfaces, base obtuse, apex acuminate to shortly caudate; lateral veins in 7 or 8 pairs. Inflorescences lax; bracts deciduous, filiform-linear to ovate, 3-12 mm, brown pilose. Flowers fragrant. Calyx tube 5-9 cm, yellow pilose; lobes deltoid, 2-3 mm, apex acute or shortly acuminate but not cuspidate. Petals opening white, later turning yellowish abaxially and reddish adaxially, obovate to oblanceolate, 10-24 × 4-10 mm, apex rounded to obtuse. Fruit red when young, greenish black or brown when ripe, fusiform or narrowly ovoid, sharply 5-ridged, 2.7-4 × 1.2-2.3 cm, glabrous, apex mucronate. Fl. Mar-Nov, fr. Jun-Nov.

Diagnostic description ^{6,7}

Combretum indicum (L.) Jongkind, Fl. Gabon 35: 48. 1999.

Basionym: *Quisqualis indica* L.

[Fig. 61. E-G](#)

Twining liana, attaining 6 m in length. Stem much branched from the base; branches cylindrical, somewhat compressed in the area of the nodes, glabrous or puberulous, usually with the pith hollow; adult stems deciduous, with 3 persistent spines at the nodes. Leaves opposite or subopposite; blades 6-17.5 × 2.2-7 cm, elliptical, oblong, or lanceolate, chartaceous, the apex acuminate, the base rounded, the margins entire; upper surface glabrous, with a prominent midvein; lower surface ferruginous-tomentulose or puberulous, with prominent venation; petioles 5-12 mm long. Flowers sessile or

subsessile, in terminal spikes or racemes on short lateral branches. Hypanthium green, tubular, 4-6.5 mm long, pubescent; sepals green, triangular, ca. 2 mm long; petals 5, oblong or oblanceolate, 1-1.5 cm long, pink, turning red when mature; stamens exserted, the filaments unequal; disc absent; style exserted. Fruit elliptical in outline, angular, with 5 narrow wings, ca. 3 cm long.

Phenology: Flowering from July to March.

Status: Exotic, cultivated and naturalized, uncommon.

Selected Specimens Examined: Acevedo-Rdgz., P. 7140; 11217; 11493; Heller, A.A. 974; Sintenis, P. 996; 5134; Stevenson, J.A. 54.

Habitat ^{4,5}

Rain forests, low woods, thickets, hedges, mountains, dry hillsides, riversides, roadsides, wasteland, also cultivated; below 1500 m.

Flower/fruit ^{8,9}

Fl. Per.: Throughout the year, rarely fruiting in Pakistan.

Statistics of barcoding coverage: *combretum indicum* ¹⁰

Barcode of Life Data Systems (BOLDS) Stats

Public Records: 0

Specimens with Barcodes: 2

Species With Barcodes: 1

National nature serve conservation status ¹¹

United States

Rounded National Status Rank: [NNA](#) - Not Applicable

Comments ^{4,5}

This species is cultivated in China as an ornamental. The seeds are used medicinally to kill intestinal parasites.

Quisqualis indica is variable in its indumentum and in the shape and size of its bracts. Most Chinese specimens with bracts still attached have linear-lanceolate to filiform-linear bracts. In this respect, these plants correspond with *Q. indica* var. *villosa*, as defined by Lecompte (in Aubréville, Fl. Cambodge Laos Vietnam 10: 22-31. 1969), who described var. *indica* as having ovate to lanceolate bracts. In FRPS (53(1): 17. 1984), var. *villosa* was said to have ovate leaf blades, tomentose on both surfaces (vs. elliptic or ovate, abaxially sometimes brown pilose, and adaxially glabrous in var. *indica*).

Four specimens from Guangdong (Deqing, Guangzhou, Nanhai, and Xingning), at least three of which are from cultivated plants, have a shorter calyx tube, 3-5 cm, and smaller petals, 8-9 × 3-4.5 mm, than is normal for *Quisqualis indica*. It is possible that these belong to *Q. indica* var. *pierrei* (Gagnepain) O. Lecompte (*Q. pierrei* Gagnepain), described from S Vietnam, which differs from var. *indica* in having smaller flowers of about these dimensions and, strikingly, in having fruit with 5 broad, papery wings 1-1.5 cm wide. However, because the specimens lack fruit, this determination is only tentative.

References

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