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New *Aglaonema* (Araceae) of Thailand

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Abstract

Aglaonema chermsiriwattanae is a new species in section *Chamaecaulon* which was collected from peninsular Thailand. The species is distinguished by its repent stem, cataphyll subtending peduncle, spathe ovate and opening towards apex, and peduncle longer than petiole. This species differs from *Aglaonema brevispathum*, *A. costatum* in characteristics of the petiole cataphyll, and differs from *A. pumilum* in characteristics of the spathe, anther dehiscence and stem cataphyll.

Key words.— *Aglaonema*– Araceae– *Chamaecaulon*– Thailand

Introduction

Aglaonema is a genus of the family Araceae, distributed in southeastern Asia from northeastern India across southern China and Indonesia through New Guinea. Nicolson (1969) revised *Aglaonema* of the world, by recognizing 21 species and 2 sections of *Aglaonema*. There are 2 species of *Aglaonema* i.e. *A. brevispathum* and *A. costatum* in section *Chamaecaulon* characterized by repent stem differing from erect stem in section *Aglaonema* which comprise of 19 species. During the Thai-Danish Expedition 1958–1966, Hu (1968), recognized 3 species of *Aglaonema*. Brown (1984) reported new *Aglaonema* collected from peninsular Thailand. In this study, *A. chermsiriwattanae*, is proposed as a new species.

Aglaonema chermsiriwattanae D. Sookchaloem sp. nov., inter species sectionis *Chamaecauli* caule repente sed absentia cataphylli subtendens petiolum recendens Figure 1.

Creeping herb, stem repent, 3 mm thick, internodes 3–5 mm long, without cataphylls. *Petiole* 4.5–6.5 cm long, 1 mm thick, inconspicuously sheathing below. *Leaf* blade ovate, lanceolate, 7–10 cm long, 3.5–5.0 cm wide; base obtuse, truncate; apex acute, acuminate; midrib conspicuous, venation differentiated into 3–4 primary lateral veins; texture herbaceous. *Inflorescence* solitary. *Peduncle* 9 cm long. *Cataphylls* 2, subtending peduncle, 3 cm long, apex apiculate, acuminate, membranaceous. *Spathe*

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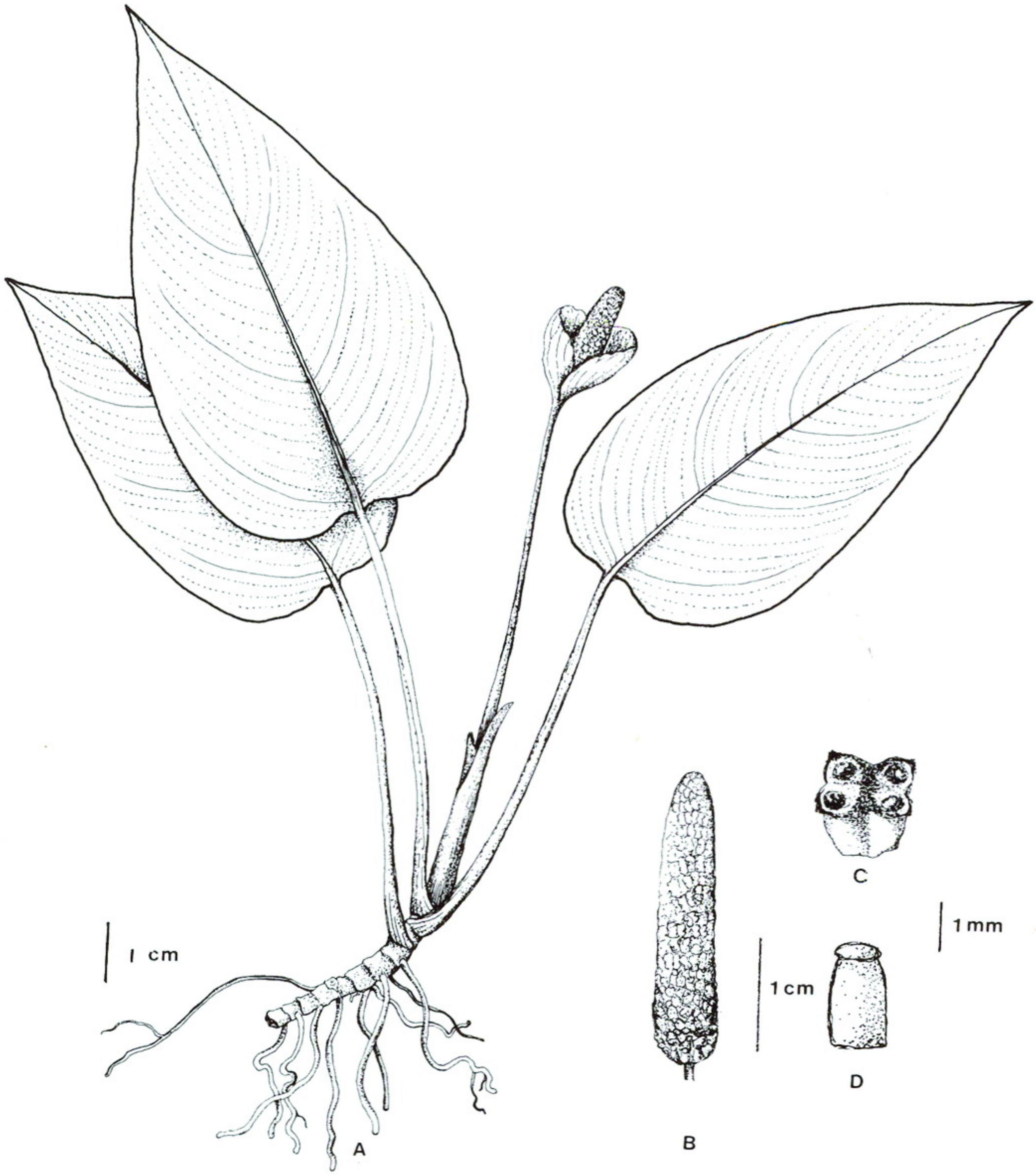


Figure 1. *Aglaonema chermsiriwattanae* D. Sookchaloem sp. nov. A: Habit; B: Spadix; C: Stamen; D: Ovary.

ovate and opening towards apex, 1.5 cm long, 1.4 cm wide, base obtuse, apex obtuse to truncate, greenish. *Spadix* erect, cylindrical, free from spathe, longer than spathe, 2.5 cm long, 4 mm wide, white; stipe 1 cm long; female zone 0.3 cm long; male zone 1.3 cm long, 0.4 cm in diam. *Male flowers:* stamen connate into quadrangular, truncate synandrium, 1.2 mm long, 0.5 mm thick, apex truncate, thecae exceedingly smaller than stamen, dehiscing by apical pores, anther wall persisting at edge of pore after dehiscing. *Female flowers:* ovary flask shaped, 1.5–2.0 x 1 mm, discoid, with 1 ovule.

D i s t r i b u t i o n.— Ta Kanon, Khiri Ratthanikhom, Surat Thani

E c o l o g y.— Under shade tree in evergreen forest. Flowering in April.

H o l o t y p e.— Surat Thani, in evergreen forest, April 24, 1969, C. Chermsiriwattana & Kasem 1485 (BK).

N o t e s.— This species is named in honor of Assistant Prof. Chirayupin Chermsiriwattana collected this specimen.

This species is similar to *Aglaonema brevispathum* and *A. costatum* in which there is repent stem. The absence of cataphyll subtending petioles distinguishes this species from *A. brevispathum* and *A. costatum*. The ovate spathe and spadix longer than spathe in this species differs from *A. pumilum* in which the narrowly lanceolate spathe and spadix shorter than spathe. Cataphyll surround stem nodes occures in *A. pumilum* but not in this species. The thecae are much smaller than stamen and persisting wall at edge of pore after dehiscing occurs in this species. The thecae subequal the stamen in *A. pumilum* without persistence of wall at the edge of pore after dehiscing.

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