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RECOLLECTION OF *CASSINE VIBURNIFOLIA* (JUSS.) DING HOU (CELASTRACEAE) FROM ANDAMAN ISLANDS

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Cassine viburnifolia (Juss.) Ding Hou is distributed along the mangrove creeks of Myanmar, Singapore, Sumatra, Malay Peninsula, Borneo, Philippines, Celebes and Siam. In India it was reported by King (1896) as *Elaeodendron subrotundum* from South Andaman Islands. Parkinson (1923) reported this species based on the King's collections. Balakrishnan & Vasudeva Rao (1983) treated this species as rare and endangered extra Indian taxa of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. While revising the family Celastraceae for the Flora of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chakrabarty and Gangopadhyay (1990) stated that "no specimens could be examined but included here on the basis of reports by Parkinson (*l.c*) Port Blair at Shaithankhari, King's collector) and Ding Hou (*l.c*)". Later Lakshminarasimhan (1999) and Ramamurthy (2000) included this species in their work based on the earlier reports. This species was never collected from Andaman Islands after King's collector. It has now been recollected after a lapse of 110 years from the mangrove creeks of Baratang Island during a short visit to Lime Stone Caves. Information about this rare species in the Indian floras is

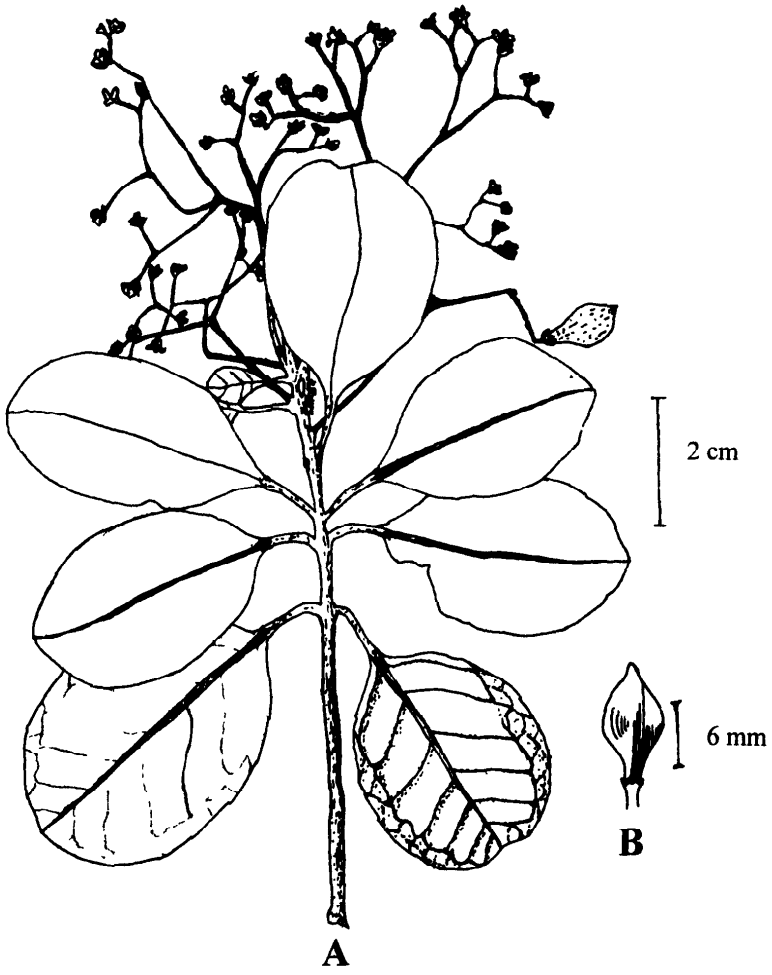


Fig.1. *Cassine viburnifolia* (Juss.) Ding Hou : **A.** Flowering Twig; **B.** Fruit.

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insufficient and representation is also very poor in Indian herbaria. Hence, detailed description with illustration is provided for its easy identification.

Cassine viburnifolia (Juss.) Ding Hou in Steenis, Fl. Males. Ser. 1, Spermat. 6: 286, t. 18 (a-e). 1962; Chakrab. & M.Gangop. in J. Econ. Taxon. Bot. 14: 116. 1990; Lakshmin. in Hajra & al., Fl. Andaman & Nicobar Isl. 1: 262. 1999; Ramam. in Fl. India 5: 83. 2000. *Aegiphila viburnifolia* Juss. in Ann. Mus. Natl. Hist. Nat. 7: 76. 1806. *Elaeodendron subrotundum* King in J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, Pt. 2, Nat. Hist. 65(2): 356. 1896; C.E. Parkinson, Forest Fl. Andaman Isl. 127. 1923. **(Fig.-1)**.

Small trees, c. 6 m high; branchlets dark black, finely striate, glabrous. Leaves simple, opposite, obovate to obovate – oblong, 3.5 – 7 × 2 – 4 cm, apex acute or obtuse, base cuneate, margins remotely crenulate to subentire, revolute, coriaceous, pale grey glabrous above, pale green glabrous beneath, midrib sunken above, prominently raised beneath, lateral nerves 4 – 6 pairs, faint to invisible on both surfaces, tertiary nerves obscure; petioles upto 1 cm long, channelled above, glabrous. Inflorescences axillary in cymes, c. 8 cm long; peduncles c. 3 cm long, finely striate. Flowers white, 4-merous; pedicels c. 3 mm long, articulate at base. Calyx 4-lobed; sepals broadly ovate to suborbicular, c. 1 mm long. Petals 4, oblong, obtuse, c. 1.5 × 1 mm. Disc fleshy, flat, c. 1.5 mm across. Stamens inserted outer margin of the disc; filaments c. 1 mm long; anthers subglobose. Ovary 2-celled; style very short or obscure; stigma obscurely 2-lobed. Fruits indehiscent, obovoid-oblong, slightly compressed, narrowed towards base, c. 13 × 6 mm.

Fl. & Fr.: August December.

Distribution : India: South Andaman Islands; Myanmar, Thailand, Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Singapore, Borneo, Celebes and Philippines.

Ecology : Very rare along the mangrove creeks and edges of tidal rivers.

Specimen examined : India: Andaman Islands, Baratang, way to Lime Stone Caves, 24 September 2006, *L.Rasingam* 17547 (PBL).

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