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REDISCOVERY OF *ARISAEMA SARRACENIOIDES* E. BARNES & C.E.C. FISCH. (ARACEAE) FROM THE ANAMALAIS, WESTERN GHATS, TAMIL NADU

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Arisaema sarracenioides an endemic species is known hitherto only by its type collection. During the intensive exploration of the Indira Gandhi National Park, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, this species has been collected at Akkamalai, *ca* 1500 m. The species was found growing along with *A. leschenaultii* Blume on way-sides in evergreen forests. Barnes had collected the type in the Naimakad gap at *ca* 2000 m high ranges in Idukki District, Kerala. He had also collected it in Munnar-Devicolam at 2000 m from the same district. Later Barnes jointly with Fischer (1936) described it as a new species in Hooker's Icones Plantarum. It is allied to *A. leschenaultii* Blume but can be distinguished in the spathe that has purple and white striations, curved and constricted at cordate limb and appendix conical with a broad base and linearly tapering apex. Also female inflorescence with *ca* 10 linear-lanceolate neuters above female flowers.

Chatterjee (1955) who enumerated the Indian and Burmese species of *Arisaema* made a precise description and a figure of inflorescence alone that concerns to diagnosis of this species. Sebastine (1962) included it as an addition to the Flora of the Presidency of Madras based on the literature. Many Indian workers (Sivadasan 1983; Ahmedullah & Nayar 1987 and Nayar, 1996) categorized it as a rare and threatened species and emphasized it not having been collected after the type. Karthikeyan *& al.* (1989), who enumerated the Monocotyledons for the Flora of India included this species based on literature only.

The present collection is a rediscovery after a lapse of *ca* 70 years, that too away from its type locality. It is also an addition to the Flora of Tamil Nadu (Bhargavan, P. 1989). A detailed description with an illustration (Fig. 1) is given, as it is less known and not included with complete description in any published South Indian flora. This communication having complete description and illustration facilitates its collection by future researchers from similar eco-regions of Southern India.

Arisaema sarracenioides E. Barnes & C.E.C. Fisch., Hooker's Icon. Pl. Ser. 5, 34: t. 3307. 1936; Chatterjee, Bull. Bot. Soc. Bengal 8: 135, f. F'. 1955; Sivad. in S.K. Jain & R.R. Rao, Assess. Threat. Pl. India: 253. 1983; Ahmedul. & M.P. Nayar, Endem. Pl. Ind. Region: 207. 1987; Karth. *& al.*, Fl. Ind. Enum., Monocot.: 9. 1989; M.P. Nayar, Hotspots Endem. Pl. India: 217. 1996; Type: INDIA: Travancore, High Range, Naimakad gap, about 2000 m, *E. Barnes* 1092 (K).

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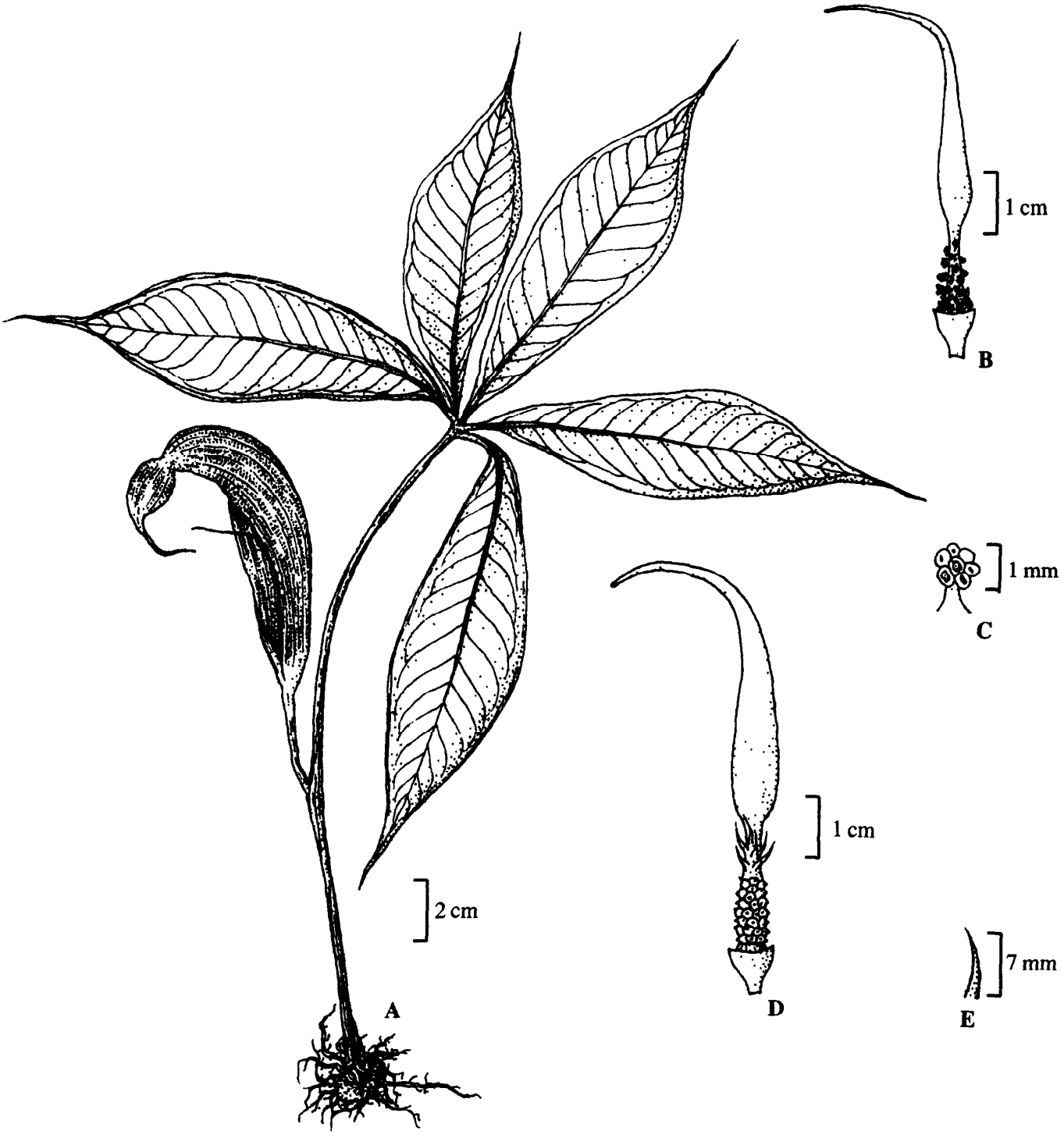


Fig. 1 (A - E). *Arisaema sarracenioides* E. Barnes & C.E.C. Fisch.
A. Habit; B. Staminate spadix C. Staminate flower; D. Pistillate spadix;
E. Neuter (*W. Arisdason* 116833 MH).

Dioecious, cormous herb, 30 50 cm high; corm globose, 1.5 3 cm, wrinkled, greyish white; roots fibrous, around the junction of corm and stem, to 15 cm long, white. Stem with purplish blotches. Cataphylls 2 or 3, stem clasping, acute or obtuse at apex, 6-18.cm long, membranous, purplish at base. Leaf solitary; petiole 15-25 cm long, terete; leaflets 5-9, digitate, oblanceolate to elliptic-oblanceolate, cuneate at base, subentire or faintly serrulate at margin, caudate-acuminate at apex, 15-23 × 4-7.5 cm; lateral nerves 15-25 pairs, with distinct intermediate nerves anastomosing in loops 2-4 mm below margin; leaflets petiolulate; petiolule 1-1.3 cm long; mature leaves with linear raphides sparse beneath. Exserted peduncle portion from stem 3-8.5 × 1-3 cm, cylindric, broad at apex. Spathe cucullate; tube oblong, gradually broadening, curved and constricted at cordate limb, 10-15 cm long, with 15-25 purple and white longitudinal striations, green-tinged, with linear raphides; limb ovate or broadly ovate-cordate, 3.5-4.5 × 2.5-4 cm, acuminate or caudate-acuminate at apex,. to 3 cm long, green with purple and white striations, recurved. Spadix 8.5-12 cm long, included or rarely appendage slightly exserted from spathe. Male inflorescence: Floriferous portion *ca* 2.6 cm long. Staminate flowers *ca* 60, sparsely arranged, many at base, few above, stalked; stalk 0.5-0.7 × 0.3-0.4 mm, white, 6-8-anthered; anthers globose, 0.5-0.8 mm, sessile or with 0.1-0.2 mm long fllament, dehisce by terminal circular opening. Appendix conical, broad at base, linearly tapering, acute, subacute or blunt at apex, 8-9.2 cm long, spongy, linear raphides occurring at base and tapering apex, white. Female inflorescence: Floriferous portion *ca* 1.4 cm long, with linear raphides, stalked for *ca* 2 mm long. Female flowers many (100-120), compactly arranged. Ovary globose, *ca* 1 mm, green; ovules 4; style *ca* 0.8 mm long; stigma papillose. Neuters above female flowers *ca* 10, linear-lanceolate, 5-9 mm long, acuminate at apex. Appendix swollen at base, gradually tapering and acute at apex, *ca* 8.5 cm long, spongy, white. Young berries globose, *ca* 2 mm, beaked, green; seeds 4.

Fl. & Fr. : April - June.

Habitat : Way-sides in evergreen forests, *ca* 1500 m, with *Arisaema leschenaultii* Blume. Less common.

Distrib. : India : Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu (Coimbatore District) and Kerala (Idukki District). Endemic and rare.

Specimen examined : India : Tamil Nadu: Coimbatore Distr., Akkamalai, *ca* 1500 m, 28.04.2004, *W. Arisdason* 116833 (MH).

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