

TETrameLES NUDIFLORA R. BROWN (DATISCACEAE)

A new record for Australia

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It has been suspected for some time that *Tetrameles nudiflora* occurs in the Cape York Peninsula region of Queensland. The late Mr. L. S. Smith (Queensland Herbarium) referred some sterile specimens to this species, but, as far as is known, he never saw fertile material from Queensland.

Mr. G. C. Stocker (Forestry and Timber Bureau, Atherton) collected good fruiting material of this species in the McIlwraith R. (13°50' S, 143°20' E) in November 1971 (Stocker 820). This appeared to be the first collection of fertile material. However, subsequent discussion with Mr. J. G. Tracey and Dr. L. J. Webb (Rain Forest Ecology Section, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) revealed that they had collected flowering material from large leafless trees in October 1968 at Claudie River (12°43' S, 143°17' E) and in October 1969 at McIlwraith Range and Rocky River (Webb & Tracey 8230A, 9293A, and 9746A). Inspection of the Webb and Tracey specimens revealed that they were in fact *Tetrameles nudiflora*. Field evidence suggests that two of the suites of specimens, i.e. Webb & Tracey 9293A and Stocker 820, were from the same tree on the western slopes of McIlwraith Range. The specimens all agree with the description of *Tetrameles nudiflora* by van Steenis (Fl. Mal. I, 4, 1953, 385).

It is interesting to record that the tree from which the Stocker specimen was collected in November 1971 was inspected by the writer in September 1971, when it was completely leafless and not showing any indication of inflorescences. Thus in a period of less than three months, this tree had flowered, fruited, and produced viable seed (seedlings have been raised from seed shed by the specimens).

The species has been found in two rather different habitats, *viz.* dry deciduous vine thicket at an altitude of 500 m on the western slopes of the McIlwraith Range, and luxuriant gallery rain forest at an altitude of 60 m on the Rocky River to the east of the McIlwraith Range. The largest trees seen by the writer were on the Rocky River, where one individual was more than 30 m tall and had a stem diameter (above buttresses) of 1.3 m.

Before the recent discoveries, the nearest known occurrence of *Tetrameles nudiflora* was in southern Papua. The other tree member of this family, *Octomeles sumatrana* Miquel, has not been recorded in Australia, but, in view of these recent discoveries, its occurrence could be regarded as a possibility.

Duplicates of the specimens referred to in this report have been lodged in the Queensland Herbarium, Brisbane; the herbarium of the Forest Research Institute, Forestry and Timber Bureau, Canberra; and the Rijksherbarium, Leiden.