REVISION OF THE SAPOTACEAE OF THE MALAYSIAN AREA
IN A WIDER SENSE

XXII 1). Mastichodendron Cronquist

by

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Trees, rarely shrubs. Leaves scattered, tertiary nerves transverse but the nerves subparallel to the secondary nerves. Stipules none. Flowers in few-flowered, axillary clusters. Sepals 5, imbricate. Corolla 5-lobed, lobes imbricate in bud. Staminodes 5, alternipetalous, inserted in the throat of the tube. Stamens 5, oppositi- and epipetalous, anthers dehiscing laterally. Ovary 5-celled, with one ovule in each cell. Fruit one-seeded, pericarp thin, seed with thin testa, scar circular, basal or basilateral, cotyledons thin, endosperm copious.

Type species: M. foetidissimum (Jacquin) Cronquist.

Distribution: A genus of seven species, one in Asia, one in South Africa and five in the Caribbean area of South America.

Remarks. The generic name Mastichodendron has never been validly published until 1946 when Cronquist validated the genus by providing a latin diagnosis. We can not regard Lam’s publication of the generic name in 1939 as a valid one since nowhere one can find an indication that the name is based on Engler’s section Mastichodendron of Sideroxylon (1897), in spite of the fact that the Kew Index refers to Engler as the first author and Lam as the second. The Kew Index can not be accepted to have given as the first one the correct generic name and combination of authors as at the same time it refers to Cronquist’s paper of 1946. One could accept, however, the Kew Index reference as a valid publication were it not for the fact that Engler’s publication of the sectional name Mastichodendron is not a valid one since no type species is indicated for the section nor does Engler refer to Hedwig’s paper of 1806. Even if he did so then

still this combination is not valid since Jacquin’s *Mastichodendron* is merely mentioned as a synonym in the genus *Bumelia* and nowhere a valid publication by Jacquin of *Mastichodendron* can be traced.

It could be supposed that Engler used the sectional *Mastichodendron* entirely independent from Jacquin’s name in Hedwig’s Genera, but then still the fact remains that it is a sectional name and that as a generic name it never has been validly published.

There is one more reason not to accept Lam’s paper as the first paper that includes the valid publication of *Mastichodendron* as a generic name since the name is only provisionally proposed as such. On the other hand Lam confuses things by founding a subtribe *Mastichodendrinae* in the *Sideroxyloideae* (p. 524) as a “novus subtribus” which would mean that *Mastichodendron* is not provisionally proposed but definitely is accepted as a valid generic name.

With these objections in mind, of which some would say that it is a too rigorous applying of the nomenclatural rules, we have to accept Cronquist’s paper as the first one that gives a valid publication of the generic name *Mastichodendron*. For the same reasons we can not accept a note by Box and Philipson (Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Botany 1, 1, 1951, 22, footnote) were Lam’s combination is regarded as valid.

According to Cronquist the difference between the Asian and American species of *Mastichodendron* might warrant a generic segregation but comparing the flowers of *M. foetidissimum* and *M. wightianum* these hold only good for the short corolla-tube in the former and the long one in the latter. The difference in size of the staminodes can hardly be regarded as sufficient for a generic separation. Also the position of the scar is no reliable detail since in *M. wightianum* the scar is either basal or basilateral, so similar to those of the American species.


Trees up to 7 m, rarely shrubs. Branchlets slender, 2—3 mm in diam., ferruginously tomentose but soon glabrous. *Leaves* elliptic, elliptic-oblong or obovate-oblong, 9—17 by 2.5—4 cm, obtusely or acutely acuminate, base narrowly cuneate, decurrent along sides of petiole; thin-coriaceous, glabrous on either side; midrib angular and prominulous above, rounded and prominent below, secondary nerves 12—17 pairs, ascending at an angle of c. 60°, curved, diminishing until inconspicuous, prominent on either side but usually stronger so below, tertiary nerves distinct on either side. Petioles 1—2 cm long, triangular in transverse section, angular below, slightly puberulous near the base only. *Flowers* in 2—5-flowered, axillary clusters; pedicels angular, 5—10 mm long, brownish sericeous-tomentose. *Sepals* lanceolate or ovate, 2—5 by 1.5—2.5 mm, obtuse, brownish sericeous-tomentose on the
outside, glabrous within, inner sepals fimbriate along the margin. Corolla 5—6 mm long, glabrous, lobes suborbicular, 2.5—3.5 mm in diam., rounded. Staminodes oblong or ovate-oblong, 2—3 by 1—1.5 mm, obtuse. Stamens 5, 3—4 mm long, filaments filiform, c. 2.5 mm long, glabrous, anthers oblong, c. 1.2 mm long, mucronate, glabrous. Ovary ellipsoid, c. 1.5 by 1 mm, 5-celled and -grooved, ferruginously hirsute at base. Style filiform, c. 4 mm long, glabrous. Fruits ellipsoid or obovoid, 1—1.5 by c. 0.5 cm, obtuse at apex and often with a short remnant of the style; pericarp glabrous; seeds ellipsoid, laterally compressed, slightly smaller than the fruit, testa cartilaginous, scar circular, basal or basilateral, cotyledons thin, endosperm copious.

Type specimen: Millett s.n. in K.

Vernacular name: Wight's ironwood (Hongkong).

Distribution: Hongkong, SE China, Indo-China.


Remarks. Accepting Lam's publication about Mastichodendron as not valid the combination of authors had to been changed also, as given above.

Fig. 1. M. wightianum, a. branchlet with leaves and flowers, b. part of leaf showing tertiary nervation, c. flower, d. outer sepal, outside, e. inner sepal, outside, f. part of corolla, inside, g. immature fruit, h. gynaecium, i. fruit, j. seed. (Tsang 21706). All sizes are in millimeters.