MERRILLIOPANAX CORDIFOLIA,
A NEW SPECIES OF ARALIACEAE FROM INDIA

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An Araliaceous plant from Subansiri District was found on a critical study to be Merrilliopanax Li, a genus founded on Dendropanax listeri King (in Journ. Asia. Soc. Bengal 67, 2: 204, 1898) from Assam. In a revision of the Araliaceae of China, Li (Sargentia 2: 62—65, 1942) showed that Dendropanax listeri King, with its paniculate inflorescence, 2-celled ovary, and 2 stylar arms did not fit within the generic characters of Dendropanax Decaisne & Planch. and erected the new genus Merrilliopanax. Apart from the type species M. listeri (King) Li, he described a new species, M. chinensis, from Yunnan, China. The Subansiri plant was found to be distinct from both the earlier described species and is now described as a new species.

Merrilliopanax cordifolia A. R. K. Sastry, spec. nov. — Fig. 1.

Differt a M. listeri (King) Li et M. chinensis Li foliis simplicibus vel alte 3-lobatis, ad basin cordatis, nervis basalibus 5—7 eminentibus, reticulatione nervorum in utraque pagina distincta, tomento stellato-piloso ad basin cordatum et secus nervos principales in pagina inferiori exigu, nervis tertiaris in denticulationes aculeatas marginales desinentibus; inflorescentia dense griseo-stellato-tomentosa, quam folia multo breviori; floribus breviter pedicellatis, calycis dentibus dense stellato-tomentosis, minutim denticulatis; petalis extus minutim stellato-pilosis, intus glabris, apicibus subteretibus, glanduliferis, quam stamina longioribus.


Merrilliopanax cordifolia A. R. K. Sastry.

Shrub ± 4 m tall, branching from the base, branches slender, terete, young parts dark brown, densely grey stellate-tomentose, tomentum deciduous, older parts greyish, glabrous, sparsely lenticellate, longitudinally furrowed. Leaves stipulate, petiolate; petioles 3.5—16.0 cm long, ± 2.0 mm thick, striate, densely stellate-hairy becoming glabrescent, dilate at base; lamina ovate or ovate-oblong, entire to palmately deeply 3-lobed, 8.5—15.5 by 4.0—8.2 cm, subcoriaceous when fresh, subchartaceous on drying, glabrescent except along the main nerves at the base on the dorsal side, dark green ventrally, paler dorsally; base cordate, 5—7-nerved; apex abruptly caudate-acuminate; acumen up to 2.5 cm long; margins irregularly aculate-denticulate; midrib moderately thick, distinctly raised dorsally with 3—5 lateral nerves on either side; venation finely reticulate, distinct on both the surfaces; marginal tertiary nerves ending into each of the aculate-denticulations; lobes in palmate lamina oblong or lanceolate, 7.0—12.5 by 2.0—3.5 cm; sinuses acute or obtuse. Inflorescence terminal, paniculate, umbellate,
Fig. 1. *Merrilliopanax cordifolia* A. R. K. Sastry. a. Habit, × \( \frac{1}{4} \); b. portion of leaf margin, × 1\( \frac{1}{2} \); c. stellate tomentum, highly enlarged; d. umbel, × 2; e. flower, petals removed, × 10; f. petal, × 10; g. ovary in cross section, × 10. (A. R. K. Sastry 44893:A).
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± 4 cm long, much shorter than the leaves, densely grey stellate-tomentose; umbels 7—14-flowered. **Flower buds** ± 3.0 by 2.5 mm, subglobose; pedicels 1—3 mm long; **calyx** ± 1 mm long, more densely stellate-tomentose than petals, cupshaped, 5-toothed; calyx-teeth ± 0.25 mm, triangular, microscopically denticulate; **petals** 5, valvate, ± 2 by 1 mm, triangular, with a median stripe, stellate-tomentose without, glabrous within; apex subterete-acuminate, glandular; **stamens** 5, ± 1.5 mm long, slightly shorter than the petals, anthers dorsifixed; **ovary** inferior, 2-celled, ± 1 mm in diam.; **styles** 2, ± 0.5 mm long, free almost to the base, glabrous. **Fruit** not seen.


**KEY TO THE SPECIES OF MERRILLIOPANAX**

1. Leaf base cuneate to broadly acute.
   2. Leaves elliptic-lanceolate, base acute to broadly acute, subentire or denticulate, glabrous on both surfaces; pedicels 6.0—13.0 mm long .......................... 1. **M. listeri**
   2. Leaves ovate, base broadly acute, mostly shallowly 2—3-lobed, margins entire with scattered stellate-tomentose hairs beneath, pedicels 3.0—4.0 mm long .......................... 2. **M. chinensis**
1. Leaf base cordate .......................... .......................... 3. **M. cordifolia**

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