



Notes on nomenclature and distribution of some taxa of *Piper* L. (Piperaceae)

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The species *Piper petiolatum* de Candolle (1866: 161) was first described based on specimens collected by *J. D. Hooker* and *T. Thomson* from Khasia hills and by *W. Griffith* (Kew Distribution numbers 4405 & 4410, these numbers were assigned in 1860's at Kew before distributing the specimens to different herbaria) from East Bengal (present day Bangladesh – however, the labels on the sheets reveal that the *Griffith* specimens were actually collected from NE India, which is discussed below). Three years later, in A.P. de Candolle's *Prodromus*, A.C.P. de Candolle cited these specimens under *Chavica petiolata* de Candolle (1869: 389), but did not mention his earlier publication of *Piper petiolatum* nor was the name listed in the '*Species e Pipere exclusae*'. Eventually, Hooker in *Flora of British India* (1886: 84) also overlooked that this species name was already published under *Piper* Linnaeus (1753: 28) by A.C.P. de Candolle and transferred *Chavica petiolata* to *Piper* and cited his name as the author made the new combination. However, Hooker observed that the Khasian specimens quoted by A.C.P. de Candolle were actually of *Piper thomsonii* (de Candolle 1869: 389) Hooker (1886: 87), which was described along with *Chavica petiolata*. The former species is often treated as a synonym of *Piper sylvaticum* Roxburgh (1820: 158) (e. g. Long, 1984), although as stated by Gilbert and Nianhe (1999) certain discrepancies exist.

The syntypes of *Piper petiolatum*, *Griffith* KD 4405 and KD 4410 available at Kew, were examined. The printed labels show they were collected from East Bengal and belong to 'Herb. Griffith'. In one of the herbarium sheets of KD 4410 (K000794628–29), two specimens are mounted side by side and bear the strips "naga hills 3/11/36" and "Suddya Jany 7/36". These labels are mounted one below the other and it is difficult to assign which belongs to which specimen. In the other herbarium sheet KD 4410 (K000794630), "the common Piper of the jungles at Dibrooghar" was written and probably were made by Griffith at the time of collections. On the other hand, in the printed labels bearing KD 4405, 'mishmee' is written, which is probably written in a much later date by an anonymous researcher, apparently not of J.D. Hooker's hand, who has mentioned this locality in his *Flora of British India* (1886). Furthermore, one of the papers of Griffith (1847) corroborates that the collections were made from Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Nagaland in the year 1836, not from Bangladesh as the printed labels suggest. Gajurel *et al.* (2008) did not include this species in their taxonomic account of the *Piper* species of NE India (Arunachal Pradesh), the reason stated by them was, as they could not locate the species. Chowdhery *et al.* (2008) also did not mention this species in their Arunachal Pradesh account although its distribution was precisely specified as 'Mishmi Hills, Griffith' in the *Flora of British India*.

Piper petiolatum de Candolle (1866: 161)

Chavica petiolata de Candolle (1869: 389) (based on same type specimen as *Piper petiolatum*). *Piper petiolatum* (C. DC.) Hooker (1886: 84), *nom. superfl.*

Type:—INDIA. Arunachal Pradesh, Mishmee hills, *W. Griffith* KD 4405 (lectotype K! – K000794631, selected here; isolectotype K000794632). Meghalaya, Khasia, June 1850, *J.D. Hooker and T. Thomson s.n.* (K! – K000794626–27 – see *P. thomsonii*). Nagaland, Naga hills, 3 November 1836, *W. Griffith* KD 4410 (K! – K000794628–29). Assam, Suddiya, 7 January 1836, *W. Griffith* KD 4410 (K! – K000794628–29); exact loc. not known, *W. Griffith* KD 4410 (K! – K000794630).

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