

**A NEW SPECIES OF PALAQUIUM BLANCO (SAPOTACEAE)
FROM INDIA**

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SUMMARY

A new species of the genus *Palaquium*, *P. ravii* Sasidharan & Vink, is described from Kerala State, India.

The tropical genus *Palaquium* Blanco (Sapotaceae) occurs from India to Samoa and comprises some 110 species. The Indo-Sri Lankan region is represented by 11 species out of which 10 are endemic (Van Royen, 1960). Most species of the genus inhabit the low level evergreen forests. Recently a species was collected from the Western Ghats of Kerala (India), which proved to be undescribed. This species differed from the rest of the species in the region and is described here.

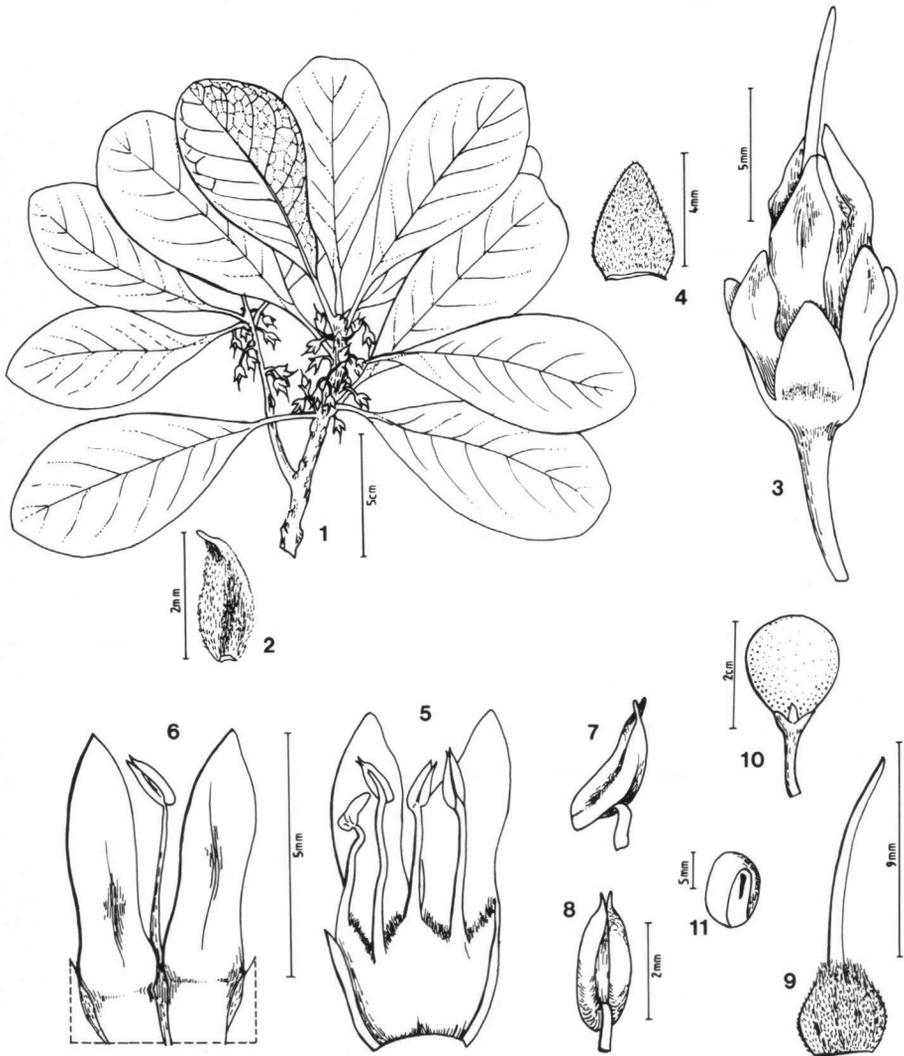
***Palaquium ravii* Sasidharan & Vink, *spec. nov.* – Figs. 1–11.**

Arbores. Stipulae parvae, caducae, Folia obovata, 7–11,5 × 3,5–6,5 cm, apice obtuso vel rotundato, coriacea, utrinque adpresse pubescentia, glabrescentia; nervi secundarii 5 vel 6, marginem versus arcuatum conjuncti, tertiarii late reticulati; petiolus 1,5–2,5 cm longus, in sicco griseus, adpresse pubescens, glabrescens. Pedicellus 7–12 mm longus. Sepala 4–5,5 mm longa, extus minute tomentosa, intus glabra. Corolla ca. 8 mm longa, ad faucem lanata, aliter glabra. Stamina 12, glabra. Ovarium globosum, hirsutum, 6-loculare; stylus glaber. Fructus ovoideus, ca. 2 cm longus, glaber. Semen cicatrice longa angustata. — T y p u s: *Sasidharan 5062* (MH, holo; CALI, KFRI, PDA, iso), India, Kerala State, Trichur, Peechi Range, 21-4-1988.

Trees, up to 30 m high. Branchlets 3–5 mm diameter, minutely appressedly tomentose, glabrescent; terminal cone 2–3 mm long, pubescent; stipules ovate to sublanceolate, 1–2 × 0.8–1 mm, pubescent without, glabrous within, caducous. *Leaves* clustered towards tip of branchlets; petiole 1.5–2.5 cm long, flat above, in sicco light grey, appressed-pubescent, glabrescent; lamina 7–11.5 × 3.5–6.5 cm, obovate, apex obtuse or rounded, base attenuate and shortly decurrent along upper sides of petiole, coriaceous, appressed-pubescent on either side, glabrescent; midrib somewhat raised above, prominent below; secondary nerves 5 or 6 pairs, ascending at an angle of 40°–50°(–60°), but near apex 20°–30°, irregularly archingly joined, prominulous above, prominent below; tertiary nerves widely reticulate, inconspicu-

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Figs. 1–11. *Palaquium ravii* Sasidharan & Vink. – 1. Flowering twig; 2. stipule, outside; 3. flower; 4. sepal, outside; 5. part of corolla, inside, showing attachment of stamens; 6. part of corolla, outside; 7 & 8. lateral and adaxial aspects of anther; 9. pistil; 10. fruit; 11. seed (1–10: Sasidharan 5062; 11: Sasidharan 5026).

ous above, prominulous below. *Flowers* solitary or in 2–8-flowered clusters axillary to leaves and leaf scars; pedicels 7–9 mm long, minutely greyish brown tomentose. *Sepals* 6, biseriate, obtuse to acute, minutely brownish tomentose without, glabrous within, outer sepals ovate, 4–5 × 2.5–3 mm, inner ones ovate-oblong, 4–5.5 × 2–2.5 mm. *Corolla* creamy white, at throat woolly but otherwise glabrous; tube 3 mm long, lobes oblong, 5 × 2 mm, acute to rounded or truncate. *Stamens* 12,

biseriate, glabrous; filaments 3 mm long, anthers 1 mm long, apex bifid. *Ovary* globose, 1.5–2 × 1.5–2 × 1.5–2 mm, hirsute, slightly 12-ribbed, 6-celled; style 7–9 mm long, glabrous; stigma mucous. *Fruit* obovoid, 2 × 1.5–1.8 cm, glabrous, pericarp brown, 1–2 mm thick, brittle when dry. *Seeds* 1 or 2, elliptic or orbicular, somewhat planoconvex, 11 × 8 × 4 mm, scar 10 × 4 mm, cotyledons planoconvex, 9 × 6 mm, albumen absent.

Distribution. India: Kerala State (Trichur, Peechi Range). Further material seen: *Sasidharan 5026* (KFRI, L), same locality.

Ecology. An upper canopy tree in evergreen forest. Flowering in April and fruiting from February to March.

Etymology. This species is named in honour of Prof. N. Ravi, Professor of Botany, Sree Narayana College, Quilon.

Notes. This species differs from the 11 species recorded from the Indo-Sri Lankan region as follows: It differs from *P. bourdillonii* Brandis, *P. canaliculatum* (Thw.) Engl., *P. ellipticum* (Dalz.) Baillon, *P. laevifolium* (Thw.) Engl., *P. pauciflorum* (Thw.) Engl., *P. petiolare* (Thw.) Engl., *P. polyanthum* (Wall.) Baillon, and *P. thwaitesii* Trimen in the absence of an acumen at the leaf tip, from *P. grande* (Thw.) Engl. and *P. obovatum* (Griff) Engl. in the much smaller leaves and few lateral nerves, and from *P. rubiginosum* (Thw.) Engl. in the much shorter fruit stalk. In the obovoid berry and the obovate-obtuse or obovate-rounded leaves it comes closer to *P. obovatum* which, however, lacks the arcuate connections between the secondary nerves and has its tertiary nerves transverse.

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