

SPATHICHLAMYS – A REMARKABLE RUBIACEA

C. E. RIDSDALE*)

Spathichlamys, a quite remarkable genus of the Rondeletieae is only known from the type collection from Burma. In fruit it could easily be mistaken for *Wendlandia*, but it differs from this genus in the flattened ovate stipules. The flowering material is most interesting, the anthers are contained within the long corolla tube which later splits and rolls open to expose the anthers. As far as is known this character of splitting of the corolla tube has only been reported elsewhere in the Rubiaceae in the African genus *Dorothea* Wernh. (Gardenieae); the splitting of the corolla is the main character separating it from the closely allied *Aulacocalyx*, in which genus it is currently placed in most recent works. However, in *Dorothea*, the style apparently curves away from the corolla through the slit, the corolla maintaining its normal form and not rolling back to any degree.

SPATHICHLAMYS Parker

Spathichlamys Parker, Kew Bull. (1931) 42; Lemée, Dict. 6 (1935) 197. — Monotypic.

S. oblonga Parker l.c. 43. — T y p e: Parker 3100 (K).

Shrub. *Stipules* adpressed, ovate, 8–10 × 3–4 mm, entire, slightly keeled, slightly pubescent when young, particularly on the keel. *Leaves* elliptic, (5–) 8–20 × (1–) 2.5–5 cm, chartaceous, above and below glabrous; apex acute; base cuneate; lateral nerves 15–18 pairs. *Petiole* (1–) 1.5–2 cm. *Inflorescence* a terminal compound thyrse up to 12 cm long, lateral branches up to 6 cm long, slightly pubescent. *Flowers* 5-merous, cream, pedicel up to 5 mm long. *Hypanthium* globose, 2 mm, densely finely pubescent. *Calyx* lobes narrowly elliptic, 1–2 mm long. *Corolla* infundibular, 16–20 mm long, outside pubescent, inside densely so, splitting along one side and rolling backwards: lobes 1–1.5 mm. *Anthers* 3–4 mm long, filaments 2–3 mm long. *Style* 18 mm, stigma clavate. *Ovary* 2-locular; placentas globose, attached to the middle of the septum. *Fruit* a capsule.

D i s t r i b u t i o n: Burma, Mergui.

N o t e. The clavate stigma separates the genus from all species of *Wendlandia* except *W. pendula*.

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Fig. 1. *Spathichlamys oblonga* — a. habit, b. young flower, c. mature flower with corolla split and rolled backwards, d. hypanthium, e. idem in t.s. (Parker 3100), a $\times \frac{1}{2}$, b—e $\times 5$.