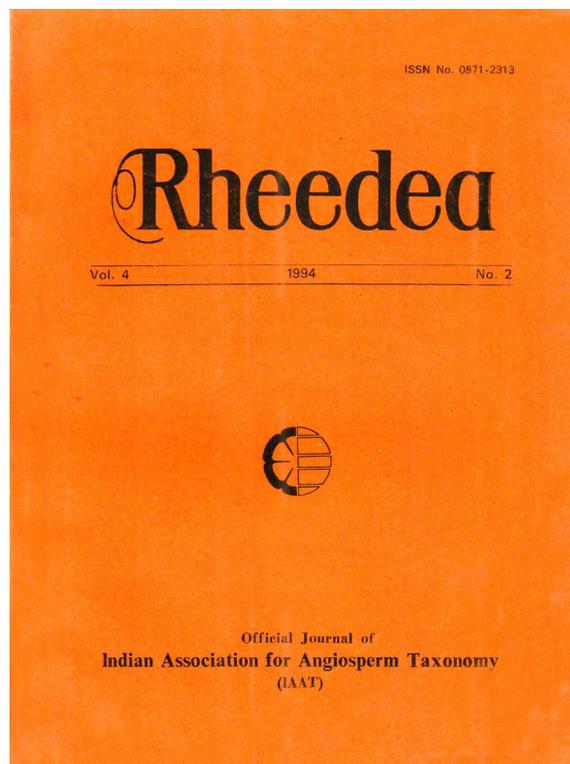




A new species of *Fuirena* Rottb. (Cyperaceae) from Kerala, India

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**A new species of *Fuirena* Rottb. (Cyperaceae)
from Kerala, India**

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Abstract

A new species of *Fuirena*, Rottb., *F. ponmudiensis*, allied to *F. wallichiana* Kunth is described and illustrated.

INTRODUCTION

Floristic exploration of Ponmudi Hills in Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala, India, at an altitude of *c.* 1000 m, by the authors, brought to their notice some interesting specimens of *Fuirena* Rottb., distinct from the already known Indian taxa. Subsequent studies done in consultation with Dr. David A. Simpson of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, confirmed them to be of a new species allied to *F. wallichiana* Kunth.

Fuirena Rottb., mostly a tropical and subtropical African and American genus of about 30 species, is represented by 7 species in India (Deshpande & Shah, 1968, Vartak, 1971). Three of these, *F. wallichiana* Kunth, *F. trilobites* Clarke and *F. tuwensis* Deshpande & Shah, are endemic to India. The genus has so far been known to have only two species, viz., *F. umbellata* Rottb. and *F. ciliaris* (Linn.) Roxb., in Kerala (Fischer, 1931). *F. Ponmudiensis*, described here, is thus a third representative of the genus in the state.

Fuirena ponmudiensis* Ravi et Anilkumar, *sp. nov.

(Fig. 1)

Fuirena wallichiana Kunth affinis, sed difert nucibus majoribus orbiculari-ellipsoidies, aequaliter stipitibus, nostratisque laeves pallide brunneis ad

Fuirena Pomudiensis Ravi & Anilkumar, sp. nov.



Fig. 1. *Fuirena pomudiensis* Ravi & Anil. A. Habit, B. Spikelet, C. Glume (back view), D. Glume (side view), E. Stamen, F. Style and Stigmas, G. Nut with hypogynous bristles.

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brunneis, et 6 setis hypogynis, bene evolutis, 3 exterioribus brevioribus attingentibus supra medium, et 3 interioribus longioribus, nucem superantibus.

Type: Seethatheertham, Ponmudi Hills, Thiruvananthapuram Dt., Kerala, *Anilkumar* 1068 (holo MH, iso TBGT and SNCH-Sree Narayana College Herbarium, Kollam).

Allied to *Fuirena wallichiana* Kunth, but distinct in having larger orbicular-ellipsoid, equally stalked and beaked, smooth, pale brown to brown nuts and 6 well-developed setiform hypogynous bristles in flowers, the 3 outer shorter, reaching above the middle of the nut and 3 inner longer exceeding it.

Tufted perennial. Rhizome woody, more or less erect, covered with persistent remnants of sheaths. Culms trigonous, sharply angled, glabrous, up to 50 cm tall, c. 3 mm wide. Leaves cauline; sheath coriaceous, up to 4 cm long, mouth more or less V-shaped, opposite the blade, puberulous to pubescent; ligule inverted, V-shaped, coriaceous with membranous, more or less entire margins, c. 1 mm broad; blade stiff and coriaceous, acute to sharply acuminate, recurved on the margins, sparsely puberulous on the margins and midrib above and below towards the apex, glabrous when old, uncostate, more or less canaliculate with parallel slender veins, slightly impressed above, up to 12 cm × 7 mm. Inflorescence a short terminal panicle with one or two partial ones in upper axils; bracts subtending 1 or 2 long or short peduncles, each carrying 1—4 sessile spikelets; peduncles trigonous, pubescent towards apex, up to 5 cm long; bracts acicular, more or less shortly and sparsely ciliate, up to 1 cm or a little longer. Spikelets lanceolate, acute at apex, up to 15 × 2.5 mm, many-flowered. Glumes oblong-obovate, obtuse, concave, membranous, 3-nerved, puberulous outside, prominently so towards apex, 3.5 mm long, awned from the back; awns 0.7—0.8 mm long, slightly incurved, more or less stout. Hypogynous bristles 6, all well-developed, 3 outer shorter, reaching above the middle of the nut, inner 3 longer and exceeding it, retrorsely scabrous. Stamens 3; anthers linear, crest triangular, subacute to obtuse, c. 0.7 mm long. Nut orbicular-ellipsoid, trigonous, sharply angled, tricolostulate, prominently equally stalked and beaked, surface smooth and glossy, pale brown to brown, 2 × 1 mm. Stigmas 3, equalling or longer than the style.

The species is named after the type locality, Ponmudi Hills.

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Fuirena Ponmudiensis Ravi & Anilkumar, sp. nov.

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