



# Lectotypification of *Cyperus blatteri* and notes on its new synonym *C. pentabracteatus* (Cyperaceae)

V.P. Prasad

Central National Herbarium, Botanical Survey of India, PO Botanic Garden, Howrah – 711 103, West Bengal, India.

E-mail: prasad\_parur@yahoo.com

## Abstract

The name *Cyperus blatteri* (McCann) Wad.Khan (= *Mariscus blatteri* McCann) is lectotypified and *C. pentabracteatus* Govind. & Hemadri is reduced here as a heterotypic synonym of *C. blatteri*.

**Keywords:** Cyperaceae, *Cyperus*, Endemic, Heterotypic Synonym, Lectotype, Maharashtra

## Introduction

McCann (1934) while describing *Mariscus blatteri* assigned Nana Sedgewick's collection 7646 as the type and no other specimens were included in the protologue. This type specimen could not be located at BLAT, but a specimen bearing same number was found marked as 'co-type', a term formerly used for syntype, but no longer used by present day taxonomists. Confusion arose after finding another specimen marked as 'type', collected on same day from same locality and elevation, but bearing a different collection number 7627. It could be a herbarium mistake, but difficult to prove it now. Therefore, since the holotype is missing it has become necessary to select a lectotype for *M. blatteri*. The specimen bearing the number 7646 and marked as 'co-type' has been selected here as the lectotype for the name.

Govindarajalu & Hemadri (1975) described *Cyperus pentabracteatus* based on a collection from Junnar in Poona [Pune] district of Maharashtra, India. However, a detailed study of its holotype revealed that it is an immature specimen of *C. blatteri* (McCann) Wad.Khan, a species endemic to Maharashtra. The immature specimen has spikes with flowers and early stage fruits. However, the available two specimens of *Mariscus blatteri* McCann are perfect with mature achenes. In addition, there is another complete specimen (W.A. Talbot s.n.) of *M. blatteri* at K with mature achenes. A critical examination of all these specimens shows that *C. pentabracteatus* is conspecific to *C. blatteri*. Therefore, the former is reduced here as a heterotypic synonym of the latter. Further, it is appropriate to mention here that determination of sedges based on incomplete and immature specimens often resulted in wrong identification.

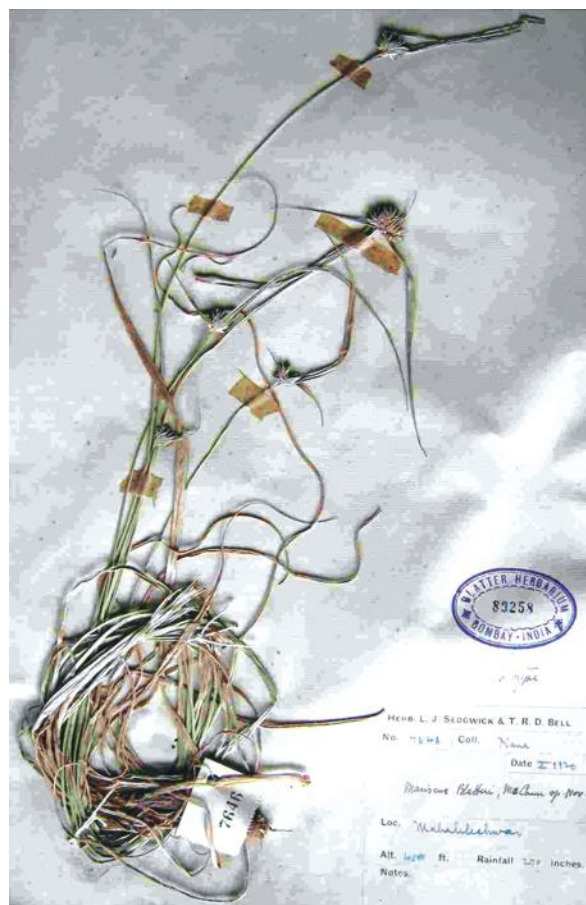


Fig. 1. Lectotype of *Mariscus blatteri* McCann

While checking the identity of Indian specimens of *Cyperus* at K, it was observed that the holotype specimen of *C. pentabracteatus* (K. Hemadri 107562A) was sent first to J.H. Kern at Rijksherbarium, Leiden from BSI, Pune, for confirming the identity. He has annotated this specimen as “unknown to me, and

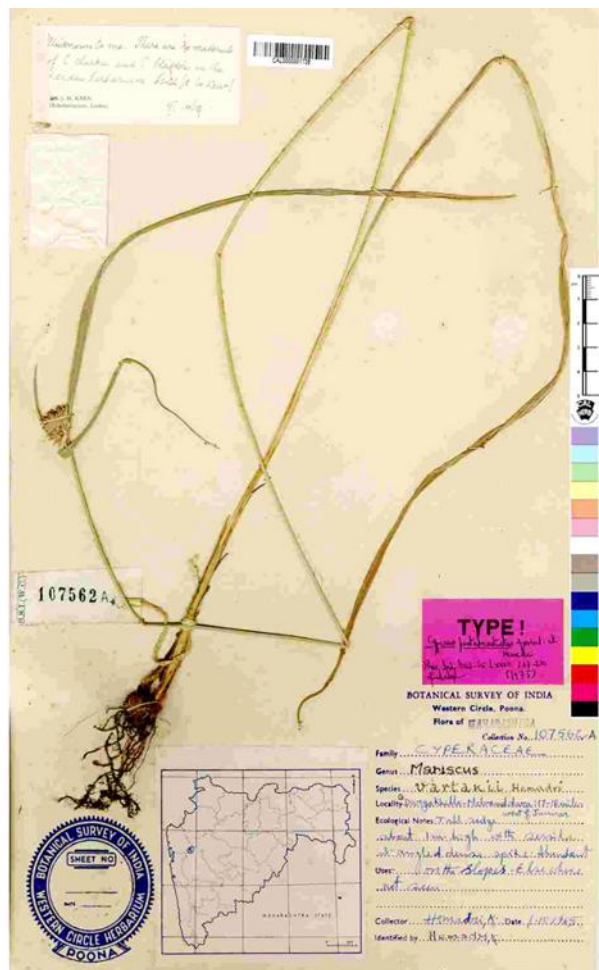


Fig. 2. Holotype of *Cyperus pentabracteatus* Govind. & Hemadri

there are no materials of *C. clarkei* and *C. blatteri* in the Leiden herbarium". Thus it was later sent to Kew as evidenced by the typewritten description kept in a folder along with a spike in a packet. In addition, in the typewritten description this species was compared with *C. clarkei* T. Cooke, a species with slender stolons. Also there is a postscript to the description, which says 'it does not match with *C. blatteri*, whose type is missing from BLAT'. In a recent visit to BLAT, the present author also searched for the type but the one marked as co-type was located.

Further, Govindarajalu & Hemadri (l.c.) considered *C. manimae* Kunth, an American species as the nearest relative of *C. pentabracteatus*. The length of rhizome was wrongly illustrated in the protologue by showing it as very long (neither a scale nor actual length is provided for the illustration). In fact, the type specimen has only a short rhizome (c. 1 cm long). The culm was stated as solitary, but, in fact, the plant should be treated as tufted, as there are two culms together in the type specimen. Therefore, *C. pentabracteatus* cannot be treated as a distinct species, but as a synonym of *C. blatteri*.

## Nomenclature

The correct nomenclature of the taxon is given below.

***Cyperus blatteri*** (McCann) Wad.Khan, Cyperaceae W. Ghats, W. Coast & Maharashtra: 80. 2015. *Mariscus blatteri* McCann, J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 37: 532. 1934.

**Lectotype** (designated here): INDIA, Maharashtra, Mahabaleshwar, October, 1920, *Nana Sedgewick* 7646 (BLAT!). **Fig. 1**

*Cyperus pentabracteatus* Govind. & Hemadri, Proc. Indian Acad. Sci., B 82: 207. 1975, **syn. nov.**

Type: INDIA, Maharashtra, Poona district, Durga Khilla–Malvanddara, 17–18 miles west of Junnar, 1.10.1965, K. Hemadri 107562A (Holotype, CAL!). **Fig. 2**

**Habitat:** Hilly areas, c. 1700 m elevation.

**Specimens examined:** INDIA, Maharashtra, Satara district, Mahabaleshwar, October 1909, *W.A. Talbot* s.n. (K!); Mahabaleshwar, October 1920, *Nana Sedgewick* 7627 (BLAT!).

**Distribution:** INDIA, Maharashtra (Pune and Satara districts), **Endemic**.

## Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to the Director, Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Kolkata and the Head of Office, CAL, Howrah, for the facilities. Grateful thanks are due to the Director and Board of Trustees, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for the facilities at K while working as the Indian Botanical Liaison Officer (IBLO). Thanks are due to Dr. Ujwala Bapat, Honorary Director, BLAT, for permitting to study the type specimen and to Dr. Rajendra Shinde, Asst. Principal, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, for his help at BLAT. The opinion of Dr. K.N. Gandhi, Nomenclature Registrar, HUH, Cambridge is thankfully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to Dr. W. Arisdason, Scientist, BSI, Kolkata, for the corrections and suggestions. Mr. D.K. Sah, Artist, BSI, Kolkata, for photoplates.

## Literature Cited

- Govindarajalu, E. & K. Hemadri** 1975. Studies in Cyperaceae XV. Proc. Indian Acad. Sci., B 82: 207–210.
- McCann, C.** 1934. Cyperaceae. In: Revision of the Flora of the Bombay Presidency. J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 37: 532–533.

Received: 10.4.2015

Revised and Accepted: 8.6.2016