On the Identity of *Rumphia* L., the Last Remaining Puzzle in Van Rheede’s *Hortus Malabaricus* (1678–1693)

David J. MABBERLEY

Wadham College, University of Oxford, UNITED KINGDOM; Universiteit Leiden and Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, THE NETHERLANDS; Department of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney, and National Herbarium of New South Wales, Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney 2000, AUSTRALIA

E-mail: david.mabberley@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

(Accepted on March 5, 2016)

From a re-examination of the germane text and illustration in Van Rheede’s *Hortus Malabaricus*, it is concluded that the hitherto unplaced genus *Rumphia* L. is most likely referable to *Canarium* L. (*Burseraceae*), *R. amboinensis* L. being *C. strictum* Roxb.

**Key words:** *Burseraceae*, *Canarium*, *Hortus Malabaricus*, India, Kerala, Linnaeus, *Rumphia*, Van Rheede.

On the face of it, it seems somewhat perverse that, in naming the genus *Rumphia* after Georg Eberard Rumpf (1627–1702) in 1753, Linnaeus should have chosen for this commemoration a tree from Kerala, southwest India, where Rumpf never worked. But similarly, perhaps also in playful mood, Linnaeus chose the name *Rheedia* (= *Garcinia* L., *Guttiferae* [*Clusiaceae*]) to commemorate Hendrik Adriaan van Rheede tot Drakenstein (1636–1691), in naming a tree from South America, where Van Rheede never worked, though he was active in Kerala. These names were published in the Appendix to Linnaeus’s *Species Plantarum*, an appendix somewhat overloaded with other similar personal commemorations (some coined by earlier authors), including *Adansonia* L. (though not validated there; *Malvaceae*), *Fuchsia* L. (*Onagraceae*), *Hipppocratea* L. (*Celastraceae*), *Matthiola* L. (= *Guettarda* L., *Rubiaceae*), *Plukenetia* L. (*Euphorbiaceae*), *Randia* L. (*Rubiaceae*) and *Trevia* L. (= *Mallotus* Lour., *Euphorbiaceae*). But *Rumphia* is the most extraordinary in that Linnaeus called the species of Indian tree named after Rumpf, *Rumphia amboinensis* L., as if it came from Ambon, Indonesia, where Rumpf was indeed based and prepared his monumental *Herbarium amboinense* (1741–1755; see Beekman 2011), the first comprehensive account of the plants of any part of Indonesia.

Equally monumental was Van Rheede’s *Hortus Malabaricus* (1678–1693), the first comprehensive printed book on the plant resources of the Indian subcontinent (Nicolson et al. 1988: 18). The nomenclatural importance of the work today is because, as with Rumpf’s work, many of the plates in it were cited by later authors, notably Linnaeus. Linnaeus based his *Rumphia* entirely on t. 11 of volume 4 (1683) of *Hortus Malabaricus* (Fig. 1). Although the supervisor/author of this important book, Van Rheede was not a botanist and could not write Latin, he had competent botanists work up
**Canarium strictum** Roxb.

**Lectotype** (selected by P. W. Leenhouts in *Blumea* 9: 415, 1959): **INDIA**. Kolkata [cultivated; material from ‘Tinnevelly’ = Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu], Anon. s.n. (BM).

?**Rumphia amboinensis** L., Sp. Pl. 1193 (1753), non *Canarium amboinense* Hochr. (= *C. indicum* L.).

**Rumphia tiliifolia** Lam., Tabl. Encycl. 1: 96, t. 25 (1791) ut ‘tiliaefolia’, nom. superfl., illeg. *Cordia tiliifolia* Warb. in Greshoff, Rumph. Geldenboek: 78 (1902), nom. illeg. Type: Tsjem-tani Van Rheede, Hort. Malab. 4: 25 + t. 11 (1683; Fig. 1).

**Conclusion**

If authorities on Burseraceae are in agreement with these findings, then a proposal to conserve *Canarium* is all that is required to protect that name against *Rumphia*. To replace *Canarium* with *Rumphia* (and make ca. 77 new combinations in the latter) for such a significant group of tropical Old World trees (Mabberley 2014: 146), would, I suspect, be unacceptable to even the most ardent believers in the pre-eminence of temporal priority over practicality.

**References**


D. J. Mabberley: *Van Rheede の Hortus Malabaricus*（1678–1693）年中唯一不明のまま残された *Rumphia* の正体

*Rumphia* は、Linnaeus が『植物種誌』（1753 年）の補遺（1190–1199 ページ）部分で、*Van Rheede* の Horts Malabaricus 4 卷、図 11 に載る Tsjem-tani にとまどって発表した属名である。*Rumphia* の正体を巡っては種々解釈されてきたものの、どれも一方の支持は得られず、植物学史上も重要な上記著作中、唯一正体不明のまま今日に至った植物であった。今回、その正体は、旧熱帯の重要な木本属であるカナリウム属（カンラン科）の *Canarium strictum* Roxb. であるとする新見解を述べた。なお、この見解が支持を得れば、*Canarium* は *Rumphia* の後続異名となるため、属名 *Canarium* を *Rumphia* に対しても保存名とするための提案が残される。実用性を度外視し、時間上の優先順位のみで、*Canarium* の現在認められる約 77 種を *Rumphia* のもとに移して新組合せを作ることは受け入れがたい。

（英国・オックスフォード大学 Wadham College、オランダ・ライデン大学、オーストラリア・Macquarie 大学及びニュー・サウス・ウェールズ国立植物標本館）