



## **Salacia Vellaniana Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep (Celastraceae), a New Species from India**

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# Salacia vellaniana Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep (Celastraceae), a new species from India

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## Abstract

UDAYAN, P. S., REGY YOHANNAN, M. S. DEVIPRIYA, V. DEVIPRIYA & A. K. PRADEEP (2013). *Salacia vellaniana* Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep (Celastraceae), a new species from India. *Candollea* 68: 147-149. In English, English and French abstracts.

*Salacia vellaniana* Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep (Celastraceae), a new species from South India, is described and illustrated. It is also compared with the related *Salacia macrosperma* Wight.

## Key-words

CELASTRACEAE – *Salacia* – Kerala State – South India – Taxonomy

## Résumé

UDAYAN, P. S., REGY YOHANNAN, M. S. DEVIPRIYA, V. DEVIPRIYA & A. K. PRADEEP (2013). *Salacia vellaniana* Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep (Celastraceae), une nouvelle espèce d'Inde. *Candollea* 68: 147-149. En anglais, résumés anglais et français.

*Salacia vellaniana* Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep (Celastraceae), une nouvelle espèce du Sud de l'Inde, est décrite et illustrée. Cette espèce est comparée à *Salacia macrosperma* Wight, une espèce proche.

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## Introduction

The genus *Salacia* L. (*Celastraceae*) consists of ca. 200 species distributed in tropical America, Africa and Asian countries (MABBERLEY, 2005). In India it is represented by 21 species. Among them 15 species are known to occur in Peninsular India (RAMAMURTHY & NAITHANI, 2000), of which 8 species were recorded from Kerala (SASIDHARAN, 2004; RAMAMURTHY & VENU, 2005; NAYAR & al., 2006). During intensive botanical studies along the Western Ghats of Kerala state in South India, the authors collected one interesting species of this genus from Vellanipacha forest of Thrissur district, Kerala, South India. Critical studies revealed this to be a new species of *Salacia* and hence described here with an illustration.

***Salacia vellaniana*** Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep, **spec. nova** (Fig. 1).

**Typus:** INDIA. Kerala: Thrissur district, Vellanipacha, 540 m, in semi-evergreen forests, 26.II.2011, *Udayan S005* (holo-: CALI; iso-: MH, SKC, SNCH).

*Salaciae macrocarpae affinis a qua imprimis differt ramulis junioribus laevigatis rubriginosis, foliis minoribus, oblongis, coriaceis, integris, petiolis brevibus, 4-6 mm longis, floribus paucioribus (1-8), cymis, corollae lobis et disco flavovirentibus, antheris 3-4, fructibus echinulatis pallide rubro-aurantiacis.*

Straggling *shrubs*; young branchlets smooth, brownish. *Leaves* oblong, 6.3-11.1 × 2.6-3.6 cm, apex acuminate, base cuneate or attenuate coriaceous, margin entire, venation semicraspedodromous; petiole 0.4-0.6 cm long. *Flowers* 1-8, cauliflorous cyme in simple fascicles from axillary or extra-axillary branches; pedicel 0.5 cm long. *Calyx lobes* 5, triangular ovate, brown, ca. 0.5 cm long, much shorter than the petals, margin fimbriate. *Corolla lobes* 5, oblong-lanceolate, 0.15 × 0.2 cm, green with a tinge of yellow towards the upper margins. *Disc* green turning creamy yellow, 0.1 × 0.2 cm, conical, tapering towards style. *Anthers* 3, rarely 4, discoid, creamy-white with a brown tinge; filaments slightly tri-radiate, creamy-white when young, but yellow with orange tinge later. *Ovary* superior, 3-loculed; ovules 1 in each locule; stigma simple umbonate, pale green. *Fruits* globose or obovate, 2.5-3.5 × 1.5-2.5 cm, tuberculate, pale reddish-orange. *Seeds* 3, ellipsoid, slightly angular, immersed in pulp, 1-1.5 × 0.5-1.2 cm.

*Distribution and habitats.* – Known only from the type locality, Vellanipacha in Thrissur district of Kerala. *Salacia vellaniana* is restricted to semi-evergreen forests at an altitude of 540-550 m. It is rather rare and sparsely distributed along the hill tract with trees species such as *Diospyros crumenata* Thwaites (*Ebenaceae*), *Drypetes oblongifolia* (Bedd.) Airy Shaw (*Euphorbiaceae*) and *Hunteria zeylanica* Thwaites

(*Apocynaceae*). Two plants have been located in the study area and, despite frequent searches along the hills and neighborhoods, no other individuals of this species have been found.

*Etymology.* – The species is named after Vellanipacha, one of the floristically rich regions along the Western Ghats of southern India.

*Flowering & fruiting.* – February-July.

*Taxonomical notes.* – This straggling shrub is allied to *S. macrosperma* Wight from which it differs particularly by the smooth brownish young branchlets, smaller, oblong, coriaceous entire leaves, vs larger, narrow oblong serrated leaves, short, 4-6 mm long petioles vs longer petioles (10-15 mm); few (1-8) flowered cymes, vs many (22-30) flowered cymes; pale yellow corolla lobes and disc, green corolla lobes green turning brown towards margins; disc green turning creamy yellow later vs green with only a slight tinge of yellow; 3-4 anthers vs 3 anthers and pale reddish-orange echinulate fruits, vs larger dark reddish smooth fruits.

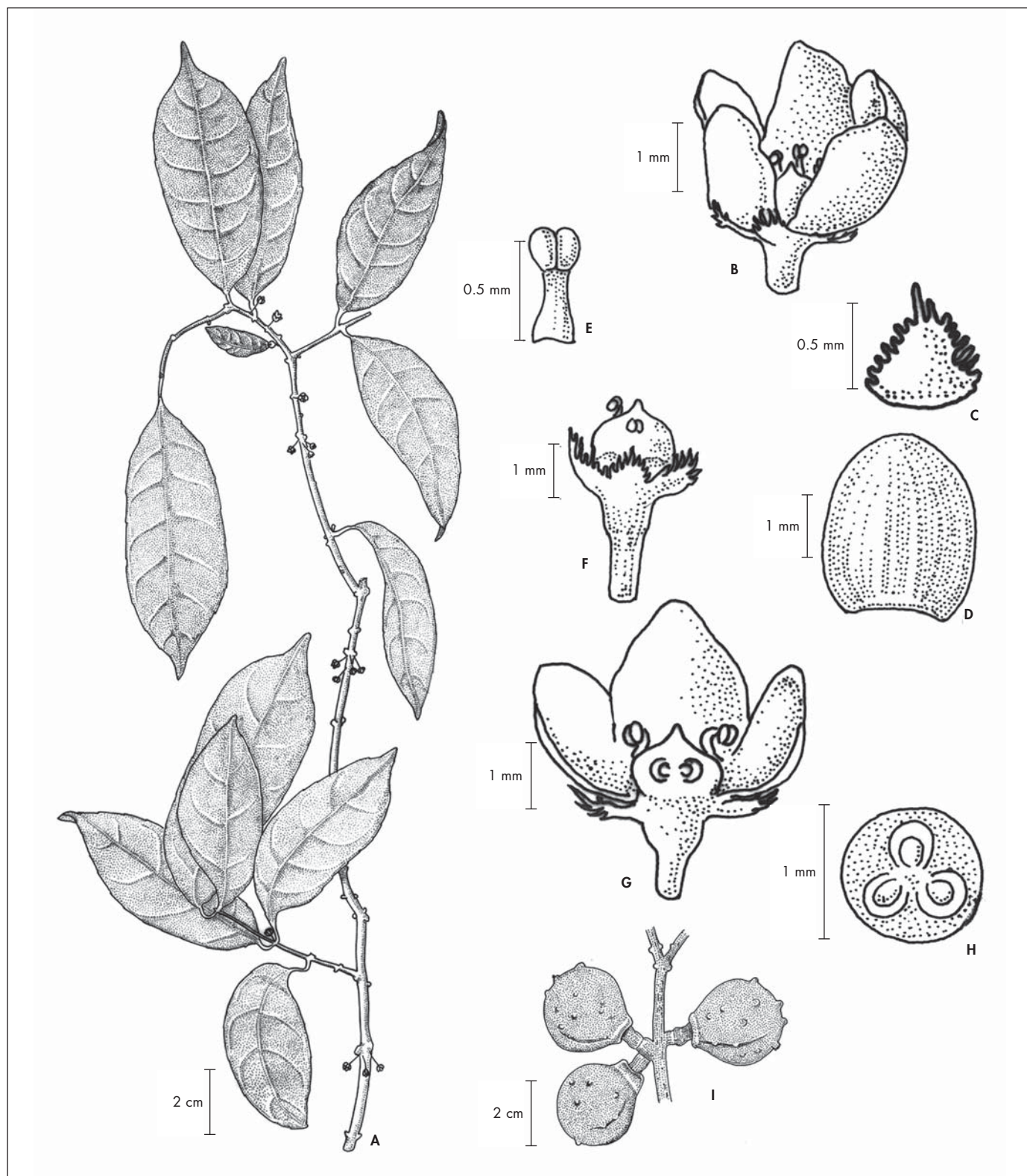
*Other specimen examined.* – INDIA. Kerala: Thrissur district, Vellanipacha, 540 m, 15.I.2011, in semi-evergreen forests, *Udayan OS002* (SKC, SNC, CALI).

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**Fig. 1.** – *Salacia vellaniana* Udayan, Yohannan & Pradeep. **A.** Twigs with flowers and buds; **B.** Single flower; **C.** Sepal; **D.** Petal; **E.** Stamen; **F.** Flowers with petals removed; **G.** Flower (longitudinal section); **H.** Ovary (cross section); **I.** Infructescence.

[Udayan S005, CALI] [Drawn by M. Umesh]