

APPLICATION OF THE NAME  
CALOPHYLLUM CALABA L., GUTTIFERAE (CLUSIACEAE)

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In the course of identification of the plants illustrated and described by C. Plumier in his manuscript (1689-1697), it becomes necessary to determine the correct application of the name Calophyllum calaba L. The protologue of this name has been considered by many authors to contain three elements, all of which, since, have been generally regarded as distinct species. These are plants from Tropical America, India, and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). We can safely accept this as a fact, and the choice of which of these is the lectotype of C. calaba L. is discussed at length by Stevens (1980). He finally decides that the name applies to the plant from Ceylon.

This decision is made in spite of an acceptable lectotypification by Jacquin in 1763, concurred with by almost everyone since, except Trimen in 1887, Britton and Wilson in 1924, Fawcett and Rendle in 1910, and Kostermans in 1976. Willdenow, Humboldt Bonpland Kunth, Choisy, Sprengel, Descourtilz, Wight, Planchon & Triana, Furtado, Howard, and Adams have all applied the name to the Antillean element.

Because Calaba was used by Plumier, and because such critical workers as Howard (1973) and Adams (1972) accepted its application to the American plant, we were impelled to look critically at Stevens' arguments.

In the first place, on p. 171, he states clearly that Willdenow "effectively typified C. calaba" by segregating out of it C. apetalum Willd. to include the Indian and Ceylonese elements. Later, p. 174, he mentions "the past lectotypification which can be changed only if the protologue was misinterpreted..." "Jacquin and subsequent workers cannot be said to have misinterpreted the diagnosis, which in any case is ambiguous". His only apparent reason for rejecting Willdenow's lectotypification seems to be the claimed ambiguity of the diagnosis -- evidently the fact that it was broad enough to include both Old World and New World species. That the ambiguity was perfectly legitimately removed by the segregation out of C. apetalum by Willdenow, he ignored. We do not agree that Jacquin's and Willdenow's lectotypifications are in serious disagreement with the protologue. Nor do we agree that "(Novae Plantarum Americanum Genera 39, t. 18, 1703) gave a rather poor description and a sketchy illustration of the flowers and fruit of this element." We would say that, for his time, and even



for the present time, Plumier's illustrations of both flowers and fruits and their parts are as clear as could be wished for (see fig. 1).

We also fail to agree with Stevens' conclusion, on p. 173, that Lamark, by including "Tsjerou ponna. Rheed. Mal. 4, p. 81, t. 39. Raj. Hist. 1537" in the synonymy of Calophyllum calaba, restricted C. calaba to the Indian element. We completely fail to see the logic leading to this conclusion.

Our conclusion is that, though Stevens gives an excellent account of the nomenclatural history of Calophyllum calaba and of the Old World species that have been confused with it, his argument lacks merit and does not prove his point. Our opinion is that Linnaeus' name, C. calaba, should be typified by the Plumier description and plate. Therefore, it applies unequivocally to the American species, which is the New World equivalent of Calophyllum inophyllum L. rather than to C. apetalum Willd. or C. burmannii Wight, with which it was originally confused.

#### References:

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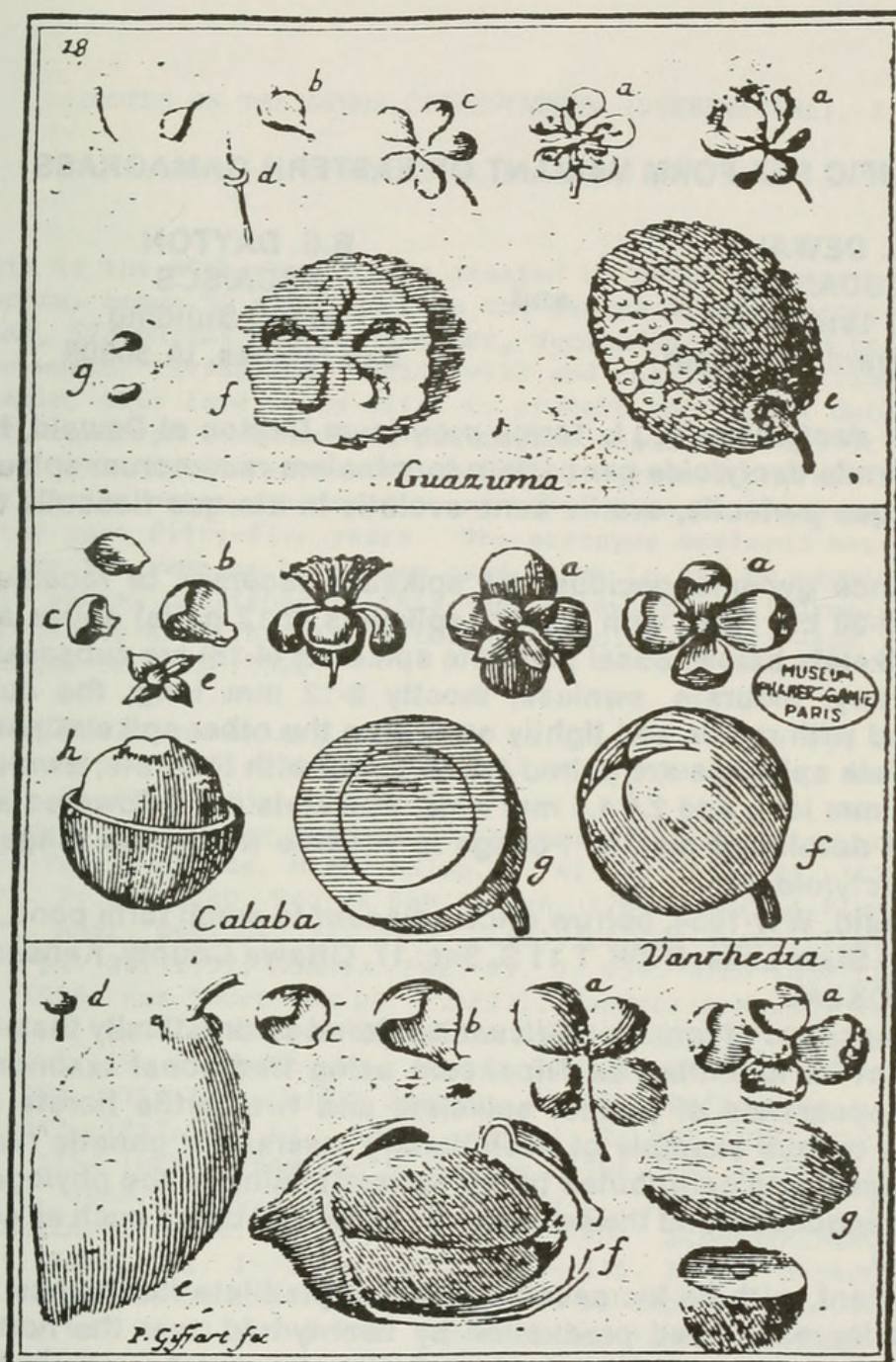


Fig. 1: Reproduction of t. 18, Plumier, *Novae Plantarum Americanum Genera*, 1703.



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