

# A new combination and new synonymy in *Kaempferia* (Zingiberaceae: Hedychieae)

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## Abstract

Searle, R.J. (Centre for Plant Diversity and Systematics, School of Plant Sciences, University of Reading RG6 6AS, United Kingdom) 1999. A new combination and new synonymy in *Kaempferia* (Zingiberaceae: Hedychieae). *Telopea* 8(3): 375–376. The new combination ***Kaempferia rubromarginata*** is proposed and the synonymy of *Kaempferia elegans* discussed.

## Introduction

Extensive research on the family Zingiberaceae over the last few years has resulted in the need for some nomenclatural amendments. A new combination in *Kaempferia* (Southeast Asia), and the placing of *Kaempferia atrovirens* N.E. Br., together with *K. pulchra* Ridl., into synonymy under *K. elegans* Wall. are proposed.

### 1. *Kaempferia rubromarginata*

***Kaempferia rubromarginata*** (S.Q. Tong) R.J. Searle, **comb. nov.**

Basionym: *Stahlianthus rubromarginatus* S.Q. Tong, *Acta Phytotax. Sin.* 33: 499 (1995).

Type: Yunnan (introduced from Burma and in cultivation): *Tong 42442* (KUN).

A number of features make it doubtful that this species can be considered a true *Stahlianthus*. One of the main characters of *Stahlianthus* is the large urn-shaped inflorescence formed from the enlargement of the first two primary bracts. Although the inflorescence bracts of *Kaempferia rubromarginata* bear a superficial resemblance to those of a *Stahlianthus*, on close inspection key differences are observable. The first two bracts of *Stahlianthus* are connate, whereas those in *K. rubromarginata* are overlapping and free to the base. The dimensions, shape and colour of the *K. rubromarginata* flowers are more similar to those found in *Kaempferia*; for example, they are almost identical to those of *K. parviflora*. Finally in a cladistic analysis based on the ITS region (Searle & Hedderson, in press), *K. rubromarginata* appears well nested within *Kaempferia* and is sister taxon to *K. parviflora*.

### 2. *Kaempferia elegans*

*Kaempferia elegans* Wall., *Pl. Asiat. Rar.* 1: 24 t. 27 (1830).

Type: Burma: Tenasserim, *Wallich Cat.* 6593 (holo: K!).

*Monolophus elegans* (Wall.) Horan., *Prodr. Monogr. Scitam.*: 22 (1862).

*Kaempferia pulchra* Ridl., *J. Straits Branch Roy. Asiat. Soc.* 32: 107 (1899), **syn. nov.**

Syntypes: Thailand: Bangtaphan, 1890, *A. Keith 261* (SING!); Malaysia: Lankawi, 1890, *C. Curtis 2605* (SING!).

*Kaempferia atrovirens* N.E. Br., Ill. Hort. 31: 143 t. 610 (1886), **syn. nov.**

Type: Borneo, received via the Compagnie Continental D'Horticulture, Gand, Belgium, vii 1886 (holo: K!).

The case for merging these three species has long been argued by various authors (Holtum 1950; Smith 1987). I have considered the points raised for the justification of maintaining separate species, compared herbarium material, scrutinised the types together with their associated descriptions, and have come to the conclusion that the possible characters that may separate them can be considered no more than the natural variation within a single species.

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