

Short communication

***Barringtonia asiatica* (Lecythidaceae), a new record for the flora of Bangladesh**

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INTRODUCTION

The genus *Barringtonia* Schott is represented by two species in Bangladesh : *Barringtonia acutangula* (L.) Gaertn. and *Barringtonia racemosa* (L.) Spreng. (Ahmed *et al.* 2009). During a trip to Saint Martin's Island, the author found a flowering tree along the fallow land field near to water and the plant specimens with flower has been collected. Further, photographs has been sent to regional plant expert (Drs. Tapas Chakrabarty and J. M. Garg) and finally examined as *Barringtonia asiatica* (L.) Kurz., which is previously not reported from any scientific literature of Bangladesh. Hence, the species *Barringtonia asiatica* (L.) Kurz is new record for Bangladesh. The local people informed that the fruits are spread by floating at sea.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Specimens with flowering condition were collected and preserved at Bangladesh National Herbarium (DACB). The photographs of fresh specimens in natural habitat were taken during the field trip. The photographs of the plant material were used to the species identification. The citation of voucher specimens deposited at DACB.

RESULTS

SPECIES DESCRIPTION

Barringtonia asiatica (L.) Kurz, Rep. Pegu, App. A: 65, App. B: 52. 1875; J. Asiatic Soc. Beng. 45 (2): 131.1876; Payens, Blumea 15: 184. 1967; Whitmore, Tree Fl. Malaya 2: 258. 1973; A. C. Smith, Fl. Vitiensis Nova 2: 595. 1981; Macnae & Fosberg, Fl Ceylon 3: 196. 1981; Henderson, Fl. Australia 8: 4. 1982; Fl. Taiwan ed. 2, 3: 90. 1993; Chantaronothai, Kew Bull. 50: 682. 1995; Pinard, Tree Fl. Sabah & Sarawak 4: 108. 2002; Qin Haining & Prance, Fl. China 13: 293. 2007; Balick, Ethnobotany of Pohnpei: 415. 2009; Schatz & Phillipson, Catal. Native and Naturalized Vasc. Pl. Madag., Monogr. Syst. Bot. Missouri Bot. Gard. 2010; Prance, Allertonia 12:30.2012. **(Fig. 1)**

Mammea asiatica L., Sp. Pl. 1: 512 (1753).

Tree 7–20 (–30) m tall, often multi-trunked and decumbent when old. Leaf lamina subsessile or with petioles to ca. 5 mm long, lamina obovate or obovate-oblong, subcoriaceous, 15–52 × 7–21 cm, glabrous beneath, margins entire, apex retuse or rounded, base cuneate, midrib prominulous or plane flattened above, prominulous beneath, primary veins 6–10 pairs, cladodromous, branching dichotomously towards margin, prominulous on both surfaces; intercostal veins weakly prominulous on both surfaces; cataphylls 1.5–33 × 0.75–1 cm long. Inflorescence terminal or subterminal racemes, glabrous, erect, 2–20 cm long, with 3–20 flowers, the rachis 4–6 mm diam., accrescent to 10 mm, glabrous, longitudinally striate; bracts sessile, oval, 8–20 × 4–15 mm, chartaceous; bracteoles triangular 1.5–5 × 4–15 mm long; calyx closed in bud, apex rounded, calyptate, rupturing into 2 equal segments, 2.5–4 × 2–3 cm, green. Flowers with pedicels 4–8 cm; hypanthium tetragonous or slightly winged, 5–9 mm long, glabrous; sepals glabrous, 3–4 × 2–3 cm; petals elliptic, 5.5–8.5 × 2.5–4.5 cm, white; stamens white with pink, red or purple at apex, staminal whorls 6, the inner one staminodal, staminal tube 1.5–6.0 mm high, staminodia 2.0–3.5 cm; ovary 4 (–5)-locular, 4 (–5) ovules per locule, disc a thick glabrous

ring, ca. 1 mm high, style 9–17 cm long, pink towards apex. Fruit ovate, 8.5–11 × 8.5–10 cm, tapering to apex, sharply tetragonous to the emarginated base; seed oblong, 4–5 cm long (Prance 2012).

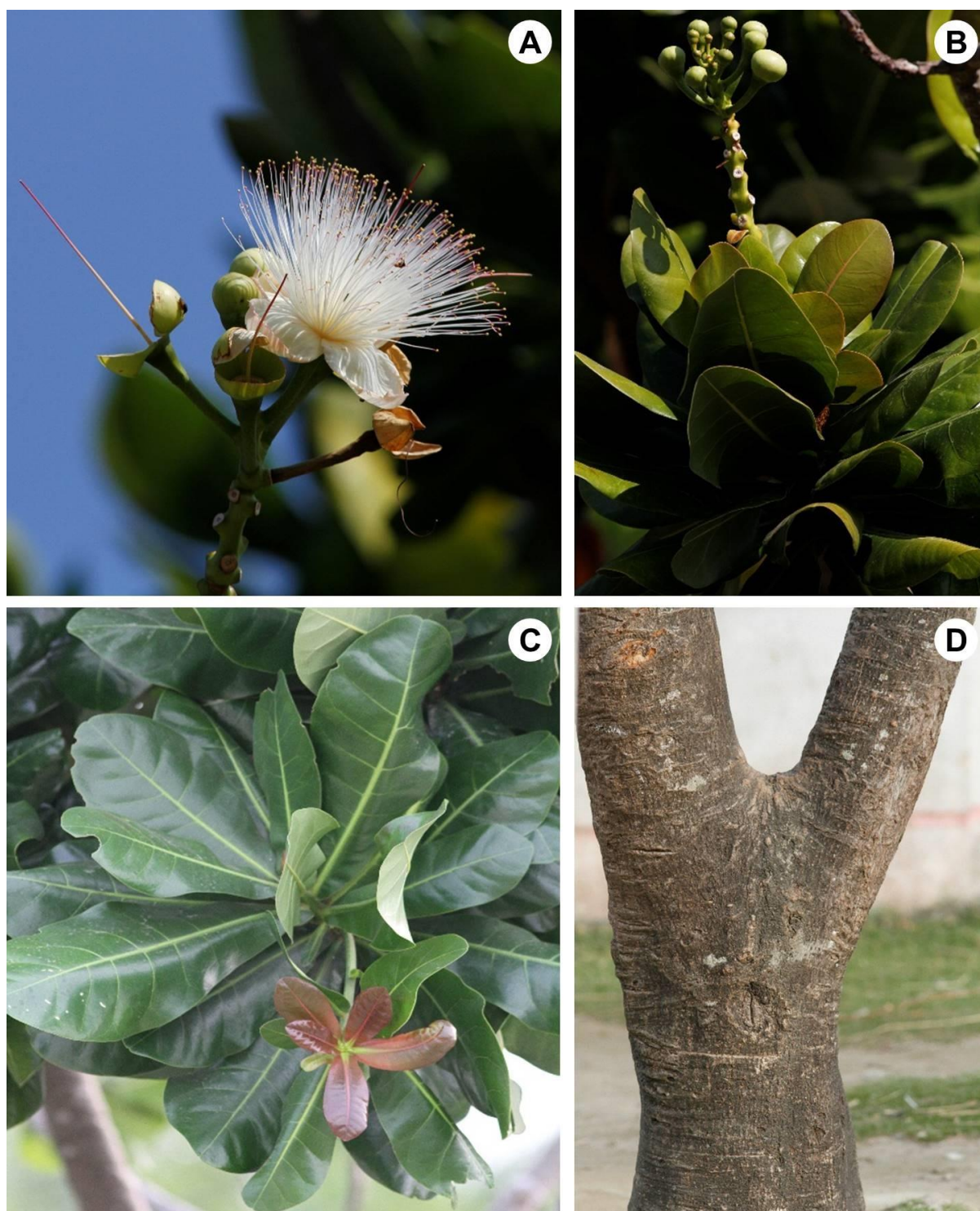


Figure 1. *Barringtonia asiatica* (L.) Kurz: **A**, Flower; **B**, Inflorescence with buds; **C**, Mature and young leaves; **D**, Tree trunk.

Flowering: January (in Bangladesh).

Habitat: Grows in fallow land near to water. Habitat goes underwater during monsoon. The fruits are buoyant and this accounts for its wide distribution on many islands and shores (Prance 2012). The tree is tropical in requirement and grows in littoral sandy beaches, coral sand flats or river banks, in mangrove swamps at sea level and also inland near rivers on limestone hillsides (Lim 2012). The tree is salt tolerant. The fruit is dispersed by floating at sea, where it can survive afloat for a few years (Lim 2012).

Distribution: It is a widespread species, from East Africa, Pemba Island, Comoro Island, Madagascar, Seychelles, Mauritius, Chagos Island, India, Sri Lanka, Andaman Island, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, www.tropicalplantresearch.com

throughout Malesia, Mariana Island, Caroline Island, North Australia, Solomon Island, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Island, to the Society Island (Prance 2012). It is indigenous to the mangrove habitats in the tropics from Madagascar, to Malesia, Taiwan, Philippines, northern Australia and Polynesia (Lim 2012).

Specimen examined: BANGLADESH, Cox's Bazar, Saint Martin's Island, 3.6 m, 20.62793056 N 92.32089444 E, 11.01.2019, *Md. Sharif Hossain Sourav MSHS 35* (DACB-Accession number 48334).

Note: This newly recorded tree species is about 6 m in height, double-trunked with multi-branched. Leaves are evergreen, mature leaf is 28 cm long and 14 cm width; Inflorescence erect with multi flower buds, bud appears to roundish; pedicel 7 cm long; sepal 4, 5 cm long, 3.5 cm width; stamen many, 6 cm long, style 1, 8 cm long, upper tip is pinkish.

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