

## Georg Rumphius' *Herbarium Amboinense* (1741–1750) as a source of information on Indonesian plants for Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778) – an Addendum

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**ABSTRACT.** An Addendum, discussing Linnaeus' generic names with particular reference to *Rumphia*, is provided to a recently published article.

**Keywords.** Ambon, *Gardenia*, generic names, Georg Rumpf, *Rheedia*, *Rumphia*, *Species Plantarum*, Van Rheede tot Draakenstein

### The naming of *Rumphia* L.

In a recent article assessing the relationship between Georg Rumphius' published work and the use made by Carl Linnaeus of the information it contained, Jarvis (2019: 91) noted that Linnaeus had honoured Rumphius by establishing a genus in his name. The correct application of *Rumphia* L., based as it was upon a description and engraving from Van Rheede's *Hortus Malabaricus* (Van Rheede tot Draakenstein, 1683: t. 11), has long perplexed botanists. A recent analysis by Mabberley (2016), however, has provided a new interpretation of Van Rheede's plant, reference to which was unfortunately overlooked in Jarvis' article. Mabberley suggests that *Rumphia* is 'most likely referable to *Canarium* L. (Burseraceae)' with *R. amboinensis* L. identifiable as synonymous with *C. strictum* Roxb.

Mabberley also drew attention to the fact that in the case of both *Rumphia* and *Rheedia* L. (the genus that Linnaeus named for Van Rheede), the taxa on which each was based occurred in parts of the world which neither man had visited (Kerala in the case of Rumphius and South America for Van Rheede). Given the significant number of previously unknown species that both men described, it is perhaps surprising that Linnaeus did not choose to link Rumphius' name with a species from Amboina, and Van Rheede's with one from Kerala.

For *Rheedia*, the explanation appears simple. Fifty years previously, the French priest and collector Charles Plumier (1703: 48, t. 11) had coined this generic name (as 'Vanrhedia/Vanrheedia') for a species of South American tree, and Linnaeus simply accepted Plumier's circumscription (while modifying the form of the name to 'Rheedia'). For *Rumphia*, the situation is less clear. As noted by Mabberley, Linnaeus appended the epithet '*amboinensis*', geographically inapposite for a plant from Kerala, perhaps suggesting an element of momentary confusion between the works of Van Rheede and Rumphius on Linnaeus' part.

Linnaeus had rules for the coining of new generic names, among them being ‘Generic names that have been formed to perpetuate the memory of a botanist who has done excellent service should be religiously preserved. This, the only and pre-eminent reward for such labour, should be religiously preserved and fairly awarded’ (Linnaeus, 1751: Aphorism 238). However, apart from disdaining the rewarding of the unworthy, Linnaeus says little about how close the relationship should be between the taxon named and the botanist honoured.

The complicated case of *Gardenia* J.Ellis illustrates some of the factors that could influence Linnaeus’ choices of new generic names (see Jarvis et al., 2014). The distinctive ‘Cape Jasmine’ was suspected of belonging to a new genus by the mercer and naturalist John Ellis who variously suggested to Linnaeus the names ‘*Warneria*’, ‘*Augusta*’ or ‘*Portlandia*’ (the last two for members of the British aristocracy) and *Gardenia* (in honour of his friend Alexander Garden, a Scottish physician in Carolina) as candidates. Linnaeus replied to Ellis (11 August 1760, L2776; Smith 1821: 134) ‘I could have wished that the supposed Jasmine might have been called *Warneria*, after the person who has first cultivated it in Europe; *Gardenia* being applied to some genus first discovered by Dr. Garden. I wish to guard against the ill-natured objections, often made against me, that I name plants after my friends, who have not publicly contributed to the advancement of science’. In a letter to Ellis later that year (October 1760, L2799; Smith 1821: 136), Linnaeus remarked: ‘... as you still persist in your decision, that the Jasmine so often mentioned between us should be called *Gardenia*, I will comply, though I cannot but foresee that this measure will be exposed to much censure. I find it impossible to deny you any thing. All that I beg of you, my dear friend, is, that you would publish the genus and its character in some loose sheet, or some periodical work, or transactions; in which case I promise to adopt the name’.

Ellis (1761) duly published the name *Gardenia jasminoides* and Linnaeus, having distanced himself from the publication of a name of which he clearly disapproved, nevertheless adopted *Gardenia* in the second edition of *Species Plantarum* (Linnaeus, 1762: 305), as he had promised.

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