

---

# Novitates Gabonensis 59: *Combretum wilksii* (Combretaceae), a New Species from Gabon

Carel C. H. Jongkind

Nationaal Herbarium Nederland–Wageningen University branch (Herbarium Vadense),  
Wageningen, The Netherlands. Carel.Jongkind@wur.nl

---

**ABSTRACT.** The new species *Combretum wilksii* Jongkind from Gabon is described. The species belongs to *Combretum* Loeffling sect. *Combretum*. The combination of the almost flat upper receptacle, the subcircular, glabrous petals ca. 2 mm long, and the glabrous disk distinguishes this species from all other *Combretum* species in Africa and, more particularly, from related Gabonese species such as *C. scandens* Liben, *C. polyanthum* Jongkind, and *C. demenseii* De Wildeman.

**Key words:** Combretaceae, *Combretum*, Gabon, taxonomy.

Just after the publication of the Combretaceae part of the *Flore du Gabon* (Jongkind, 1999), a new *Combretum* Loeffling specimen in flower was sent to the herbarium in Wageningen. This specimen was collected by Chris Wilks in East Gabon and sent first to the Missouri Botanical Garden herbarium by Gordon McPherson. With the *Flore du Gabon* already published, it was not difficult to recognize it as a new undescribed species. Recently this species was included in the *Checklist of Gabonese Vascular Plants* using a provisional name. The author wants to validate the name in this publication because publishing a new taxon in a checklist should be avoided, *sensu* Rec. 30A.2 (Greuter et al., 2000: 52). With this species, there are now 46 different species of *Combretum* lianas known from Gabon (Jongkind, 2006).

***Combretum wilksii*** Jongkind, sp. nov. TYPE: Gabon, Haut-Ogooué: E of Okondja, near village of Ambinda, along Sebé River, 27 Sep. 1996, Wilks in McPherson 16732 (holotype, WAG; isotypes, LBV, MO).

Section *Combretum*. Liana magra; flores tetrameri; receptaculum superius patelliforme; petala rotundata, glabra et discus glabrus.

Large liana. Leaves opposite; petiole up to 1 cm; blade up to 18 × 9 cm, almost glabrous; 6 to 9 pairs of main secondary nerves, domatia inconspicuous,

tertiary nervation parallel to each other and just visible; base rounded to narrowly cordate; apex shortly acuminate. Scales ca. 40 µm diam. Inflorescence paniculate, up to 40 cm, branches covered with scales and small unbranched hairs, bracts inconspicuous. Flowers 4-merous, sessile; receptacle covered with scattered scales and few hairs; lower receptacle 2 mm high; upper receptacle patelliform, 4 mm wide; calyx lobes shortly triangular, pubescent inside; petals ca. 2 × 2 mm, glabrous, yellowish; stamens ca. 1.5 mm, anthers 0.5 mm; disk lobed, 2.5 mm diam., glabrous, style ca. 1.5 mm. Fruit not known.

**Habitat and distribution.** Only known from the forest at the type locality in Gabon.

The combination of the almost flat upper receptacle, the subcircular, glabrous petals ca. 2 mm long, and the glabrous disk distinguishes this species from all other *Combretum* species in Africa and, more particularly, from related Gabonese species such as *C. scandens* Liben, *C. polyanthum* Jongkind, and *C. demenseii* De Wildeman.

In the key to the *Combretum* species in the *Flore du Gabon* (Jongkind, 1999: 9), the following couplet should be inserted between complets 21 and 22. From 21' one should go to the new couplet:

- a. Petals almost round, ca. 2 mm diam. Disk ca. 2.5 mm, glabrous, lobed . . . . . *Combretum wilksii*
- b. Petals clearly longer than wide or disk smaller than 2 mm and pubescent on the margin . . . . . [follow existing key]

#### Literature Cited

- Greuter, W., J. McNeill, F. R. Barrie, H. M. Burdet, V. Demoulin, F. S. Filgueiras, D. H. Nicolson, P. C. Silva, J. E. Skog, P. Treharne, N. J. Turland & D. L. Hawksworth (editors). 2000. International Code of Botanical Nomenclature (Saint Louis Code). Regnum Veg. 138.
- Jongkind, C. C. H. 1999. Combretaceae. In *Flore du Gabon*. Part 35. Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.
- . 2006. Combretaceae. Pp. 110–113 in M. S. M. Saeef, J. J. Wierniga & C. C. H. Jongkind et al., Checklist of Gabonese Vascular Plants. Scripta Botanica Belgica, Vol. 35. Le Jardin Botanique de Belgique, Meise.