

A New Species of *Wallichia* from Thailand

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Recent work leading to a book on the palms and cycads of Thailand to be published in time for the IPS Biennial Meeting in September, 1998, has brought to light the existence of a new species of *Wallichia*. Several beautiful specimens of the new species are cultivated at Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, host of the 1998 meeting, where they are misidentified as *W. caryotoides*. Although similar to *W. caryotoides* in habit and leaf, the new species differs markedly in floral details and is actually more closely related to *W. siamensis*.

***Wallichia marianniae* Hodel sp. nov.** Figs. 1-4.

Wallichia siamensis Becc. affinis sed pinnis lobatis non profundis, floribus masculinis staminibus 16-18 differt. Typus: Thailand, Trang, D. R. Hodel, P. & R. Vatcharakorn 1703 (holotypus BK).

Small, clustered, understory palm 2.5 m tall (Fig. 1) usually with one dominant stem and several basal suckers. Stems 50 cm tall, 10 cm diam., covered with persistent, fibrous leaf sheaths. Leaves 6, pinnate, ascending-spreading-arching; sheath 50-75 cm long, margins fibrous; petiole 1-1.5 m long; petiole and sheath with brownish indument; rachis 1 m long; pinnae 5-6 on each side of rachis, 35 x 8 cm, long-rhomboid, 1 shallow lobe on each margin (Fig. 2), glossy green above, silver-white below, margins in apical half jaggedly toothed, midrib raised below, terminal pinna 33 x 16 cm, 3-lobed, 3-nerved. Inflorescences interfoliar and terminal, bursting through sheaths of much-reduced terminal leaves; staminate lateral, 30 cm long (Fig. 3); peduncle short; rachis 7 cm long with 3 main branches, the lowest the largest with subpeduncle 15 cm long sheathed by 6 bracts to 15 cm long, these loosely imbricate, long-open, acute, densely covered with dark cinnamon brown to silvery tan hairs and scales; rachillae 7, 10 cm long, drooping, densely flowered; 2 other main

branches smaller with fewer rachillae and fewer and smaller bracts; pistillate inflorescence terminal (Fig. 4), similar to staminate only with stouter branches; rachillae 10-12, 15-20 cm long, ascending, +/- stiff. Staminate flowers 5 x 3.5 mm, oblong-ovoid, whitish with purplish or burgundy blush; calyx 1.5 mm high, cupular, sepals connate; petals 5 x 3 mm, ovate, valvate, free to base, acute, prominently striated; stamens 16-18, 3.5 mm high, filaments 0.7 mm long, anthers 3 mm long, dorsifixed at base; receptacle 0.75 mm high. Pistillate flowers not seen. Fruits immature, 8-9 x 6 mm, oblong-ovoid, reddish.

Distribution: *Wallichia marianniae* occurs sparingly in wet forest on well drained slopes on the west side of south peninsular Thailand from Satun to Trang from 200-400 m elevation.

The specific epithet honors my wife Marianne who has selflessly encouraged and supported my work with palms for over 20 years and tolerated my absences, preoccupations, and foibles with grace and understanding. *Wallichia marianniae* is closest to *W. siamensis* but the latter differs in its pinnae with a deep, abruptly jutting lobe on each margin, grayish indument on leaf sheaths and petioles, and staminate flowers with 12-15 stamens. *W. caryotoides*, which may not occur in Thailand, differs in the staminate flowers having only six stamens.

Wallichia marianniae makes a handsome ornamental. In cultivation, the species forms densely clustered clumps to 2.5 meters tall with many, well developed stems. In contrast, plants in the wild are nearly always much smaller with only one dominant, central stem.



Fig 1 *Wallichia marianniae*, cultivated, Nong Nooch Tropical Garden.



Fig 2 Pinnae of *Wallichia marianniae*.

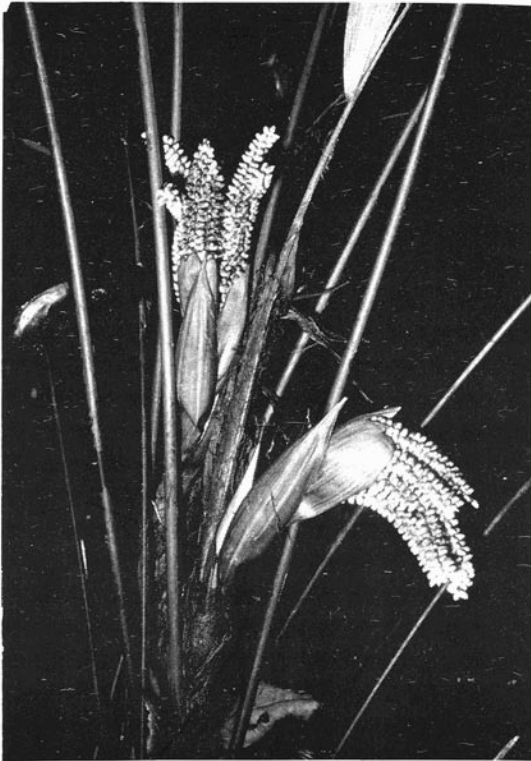


Fig 3 Staminate inflorescences of *Wallichia marianniae*, *Hodel et al. 1703* (holotype), Trang.



Fig 4 Pistillate infructescence of *Wallichia marianniae*, cultivated, Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, Thailand.