

A Note on *Embelia ridleyi* King and Gamble

By JAMES SINCLAIR

BY CHANCE, when examining some *Embelia* species in the Singapore Herbarium, I was surprised to see that *Embelia ridleyi* King and Gamble was not an *Embelia* at all but a species of *Horsfieldia*, namely *Horsfieldia canarioides* (King) Warb., synonym *H. racemosa* (King) Warb.

Embelia ridleyi King and Gamble was published in "Materials, Flora Malayan Peninsula" volume 4 no. 17 (1905) 112. It is also mentioned in Ridley's "Flora of the Malay Peninsula" volume 2 (1923) 234. The type, *Ridley 6324*, is from Bukit Mandai, Singapore. There is one more sheet from Chua Chu Kang, Singapore, *Ridley*, date 7th May, 1895. Both are deposited in the Singapore Herbarium. King and Gamble state, "Climbing shrub ? Calyx lobes 4-5, ovate, gland-dotted, very small. Corolla and rest not seen." Ridley says that it is a large climber at the edges of woods, very rare and not seen again, probably extinct.

In *Horsfieldia canarioides* the perianth lobes are split nearly to the base and open wider than in most other species of *Horsfieldia*. The usual number is three but there are often four and sometimes five. There is only one whorl of lobes and no separate corolla. The leaves superficially recall those of *Embelia coriacea*. Perhaps for these reasons King, Gamble and Ridley were misled. There are, however, no climbing species in the genus *Horsfieldia*. At Mandai Road, the bases of the tree trunks in the forest, being at a lower level than the road, are often obscured with undergrowth and it might be quite easy to mistake a tree for a climber in this way. *H. canarioides* also found at Bukit Timah has not been collected in Singapore for many years and is now probably extinct. It occurs, however, in Johore, Malacca, Selangor, Perak, Penang and Kedah.