

**A revised generic key to the Capparaceae of Thailand  
with a description of *Neothorelia laotica* Gagnep.**

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ABSTRACT. A revised generic key to the Capparaceae of Thailand is presented. Changes to the Flora of Thailand key were necessitated by the discovery of *Neothorelia laotica* in south-western Thailand. A description of this taxon is also presented.

In January 2004, as part of a joint Harvard-BKF project to study the plant diversity and biogeography of peninsular Thailand, an unusual species of Capparaceae was collected in Kui Buri National Park, Prachuap Khiri Khan province (*Middleton et al.* 2471 (A, BKF)). This specimen unquestionably belonged to the Capparaceae *sensu lato* but could not be identified to genus using the Flora of Thailand treatment to the family (Chayamarit, 1991). Specifically, no species of Capparaceae in the Thai flora was known to be a woody climber with trifoliolate leaves and six petals. Subsequent study proved this taxon to be *Neothorelia laotica* Gagnep., a rare species originally described from Luang Prabang, Laos (Gagnepain, 1908a). The first mention in the literature of this species in Thailand was made by Maxwell (1994) with regard to a collection he made in Kanchanaburi province. The only other known collection of this species in Thailand was made by Kerr from “Takanun” in Kanchanaburi in February 1926 [*Kerr* 10510 (K)].

In order to aid in the identification of this species, and to make the accounting of the Capparaceae in Thailand more complete, a revised generic key to the family that includes *Neothorelia* is presented. A description of the only species in the genus is also presented. This description is based on the *Middleton et al.* specimen and Gagnepain’s (1908a, 1908b) description of Laos material. The numbering of genera refers to that of Chayamarit (1991) and treatments of the other genera and species can be found therein. In addition to the changes made below, the part of the family description relating to petals in Chayamarit (1991) should be amended to read “Petals 4, 6, or 0”.

Revised Key to the Genera of Capparaceae in Thailand

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|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Leaves simple   |                           |
| 2. Sepals 4. Petals 4. Androgynophore absent. Ovary 1-locular; stigma 1                    | <b>1. <i>Capparis</i></b> |
| 2'. Sepals 6. Petals 0. Stamens born on a short androgynophore. Ovary 3-locular; stigmas 3 | <b>2. <i>Stixis</i></b>   |

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- 1'. Leaves palmately compound
3. Annual herbs. Fruit a capsule, cylindrical, 2-valved; dehiscent from the base **3. Cleome**
- 3'. Trees, shrubs, or woody climbers. Fruit a berry, indehiscent
4. Trees or shrubs. Sepals 4. Petals 0 or 4 and much exceeding the sepals
5. Petals 0. Fruit ellipsoidal or rounded, 1.3–1.5 cm. diam. **4. Maerua**
- 5'. Petals 4, much larger than the sepals, long-clawed. Fruit globose to elongate, 1.5–9.5 cm. diam. **5. Crateva**
- 4'. Woody climbers. Sepals 6. Petals 6, approximately the same length as the sepals **6. Neothorelia**

## NEOTHORELIA

Gagnep., Bull. Soc. Bot. France 55: 269. 1908; Gagnep. in Lecomte, Fl. Indo-Chine 1: 198. 1908.

Woody climbers; branches lenticellate, unarmed. *Leaves* alternate, trifoliate, exstipulate, with pustules throughout the leaflets. *Inflorescence* paniculate (occasionally racemose), axillary or terminal. *Flowers* small, pedicillate. *Sepals* 6, elliptic, imbricate, persistent in fruit. *Petals* 6, approximately the same length as the petals, clawed. *Stamens* numerous, much exceeding the perianth. *Ovary* on an elongate gynophore, 3-locular with axile placentation; each locule with 2 ovules; stigma 3-fid. *Fruit* a berry.

A monospecific genus known only from Laos and Thailand.

**Neothorelia laotica** Gagnep., Bull. Soc. Bot. France 55: 269. 1908; Gagnep. in Lecomte, Fl. Indo-Chine 1: 198. 1908. Plate XVI. Type: Laos, Luang Prabang, Muong Mai, Pak Lay, Lakhon, *Thorel* 3280 (P!).

Woody climber to 6m, branches unarmed. *Leaflets* 2–2.5 times as long as wide; petiolule 3–7 mm; elliptic to obovate, 6–13 by 2–5 cm, glabrous on both surfaces, pustulate throughout; base acute; apex acute; nerves reticulate, raised on both surfaces when dry. *Petiole* 4–10 cm. *Inflorescences* few branched, axillary or terminal, panicles or racemes, 6–30 cm. *Pedicels* 1–3 mm, tomentose. *Bracts* minute, linear, 1–2.5 mm. *Sepals* green, oblanceolate, 3–3.2 by 1 mm, base swollen, apex acuminate, villous on both surfaces with a tomentose margin. *Petals* yellow-green, clawed, 2.5–3 mm by 1.5 mm, claw 1–1.3 mm, outer surface villous, inner surface densely villous to tomentose. *Stamens* numerous (ca. 15–20); filaments yellow-green, 4.5–6.5 mm, length variable within a flower, pubescent at base, attached to the gynophore; anther 0.8 mm, white. *Gynophore* 4–5 mm, tomentose. *Ovary* rounded to elliptic 0.8–1.2 mm, pubescent; style (0.5)–2–2.5 mm, stigma minute. *Fruit* a berry, perianth persistent.

Thailand.— SOUTH-WESTERN: Kanchanaburi [Sangkhlaburi, Thung Yai Naresuan Wildlife Reserve, 17 April 1994, Maxwell 94–547 (?CMU, not seen)]; Kanchanaburi [Thakhanun, 14 Feb. 1926, Kerr 10510 (K)]; Prachuap Khiri Khan [Kui Buri, Kui Buri National Park, 24 Jan. 2004, Middleton et al. 2471 (A, BKF)].

Distribution.— Laos.

Ecology.— Dry evergreen forests and degraded forests on limestone terrain; ca. 200–400m. Flowering January–February (March?), fruiting April.

## REFERENCES

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