

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

The origin and identity of *Calliandra calothyrsus* Meissn. and its synonym *C. confusa* Sprague & Riley (Mimos.)

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In Indonesia a species known as *Calliandra calothyrsus* is considered to be a very useful plant in agroforestry. The plant concerned is also treated in a separate publication by the National Research Council (1983). According to Verhoef (1941) it was introduced by this

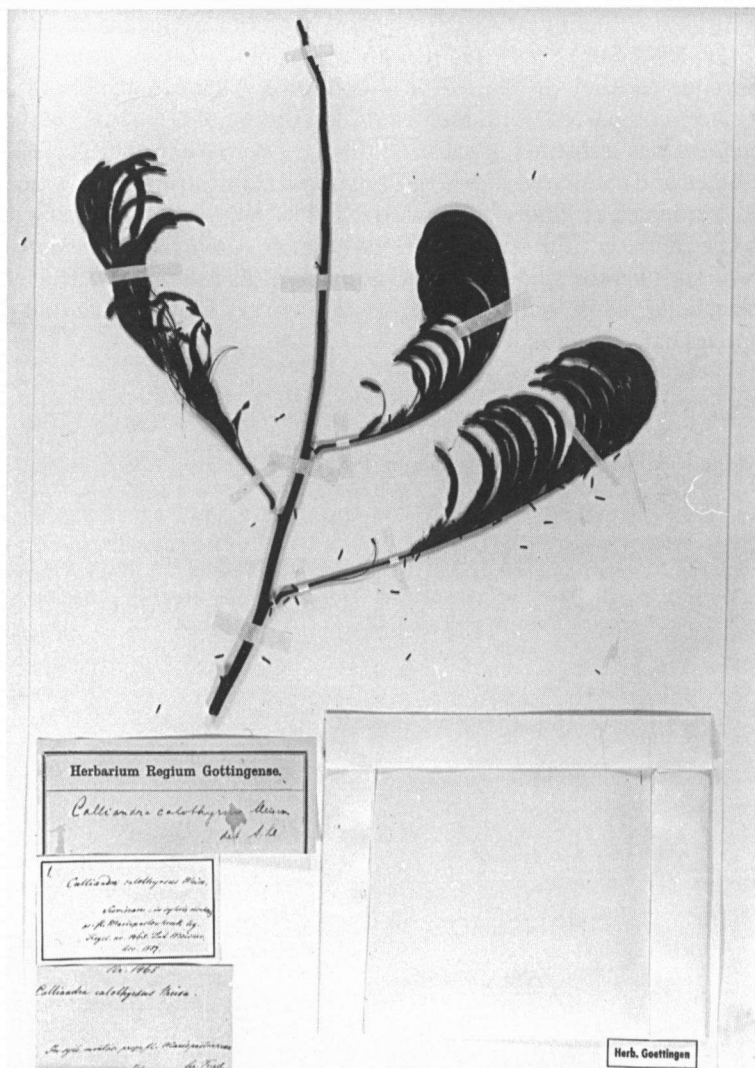


Fig. 1. *Calliandra calothyrsus* Meissn.

name to Indonesia from Guatemala in 1936. Confusion arose about the true identity of this introduction, as *C. calothyrsus* is not known to occur naturally in Guatemala or in adjacent countries, therefore, herbarium material of the taxon introduced into Indonesia was requested in order to be compared with the original description and type of *Calliandra calothyrsus*.

This species was described by Meissner in 1848, based on a specimen collected by Kegel in Surinam 'in sylvis montosis prope flum. Mariepaston, m. Majo 1846 legit Kegel n. 1465 (sine fr.)'. Kleinhoonte (1940), in her treatment of the Mimosaceae for the *Flora of Suriname*, cites for this species (as *Annesia calothyrsus* (Meissn.) Kleinh.) the type only, and no further collections, but she confines its distribution to Guatemala. This is in accordance with the information given by Verhoef. An investigation of the Utrecht herbarium did not reveal any collection of this species from Surinam.

Comparison of Kegel's plant, received on loan from Göttingen, with the material from Indonesia clearly demonstrated that the Indonesian introduction indeed represents *C. calothyrsus*. Identification of the same material by means of the *Flora of Guatemala* (Standley & Steyermark 1946) easily results in *C. confusa*, a species described in 1923 by Sprague & Riley and based on a collection from Guatemala (Tuerckheim 690). The authors compared it with Meissner's description of *C. calothyrsus* but concluded that *C. confusa* was a distinct species. At the Kew herbarium the type of *C. confusa* has been studied and compared with Kegel's material from Surinam, for which the assistance of Dr B. Verdcourt is kindly acknowledged. The only reasonable conclusion was that both names represent the same species and that *C. calothyrsus* Meissn. is its correct name. *C. confusa* is hereby sunk into the synonymy of *C. calothyrsus*. That this species has never been collected in Surinam since Kegel may very well indicate that it was an introduced species in Surinam as well.

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