

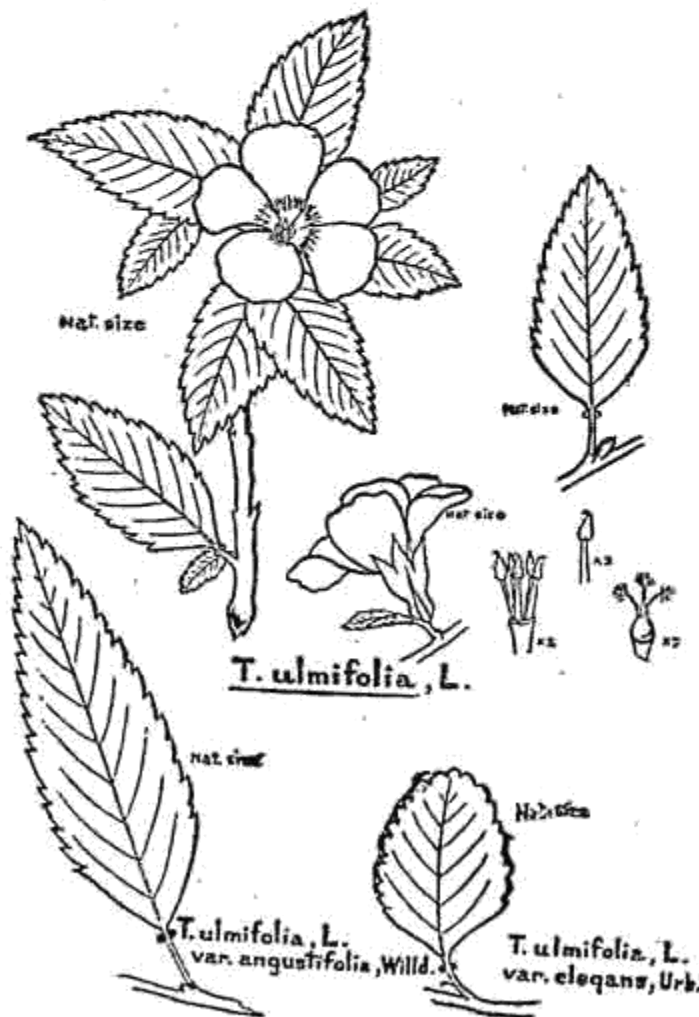
# A Contribution to the Taxonomy of the Genus *Turnera*, L.

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The genus *Turnera*, L. (*Turneraceae*) is not dealt with in detail in any of the Floras and an adequate description is wanting. Haines (1921) and Trimen (1894) recognise only one species, viz., *T. ulmifolia*, L. while Grisebach (1864) mentions three species, namely, *T. ulmifolia*, L., *T. parviflora*, Benth., and *T. pumilia*, L. Harvey (1862) has described in his flora only one species, *T. capensis*, Harv. Hooker (1894) has omitted the entire family while Gamble (1924) gives only a very meagre description of the solitary species *T. ulmifolia*, L. and the two varieties *T. ulmifolia*, L. var. *angustifolia*, Willd., and *T. ulmifolia*, L. var. *elegans*, Urb., pointing out only the difference in leaves.

In this brief note it is proposed to describe the single species and the two varieties occurring in South India. This is a West Indian and Tropical American species found growing wild in both the east and west coasts in South India. Though it is a weed it is quite ornamental, with yellowish flowers. In addition to the difference in the shape and size of the leaves, the colour of the flower and the nature of the bracts also differ. The description of these have been made from the following sheet of the Madras Herbarium.



*T. ulmifolia*, L. M. H. No. 84671. Collected by R. D. Anstead, 1918, Kottayam.

*T. ulmifolia*, L. var. *angustifolia*, Willd. M. H. No. 81719. Collected by G. V. Narayana at Kasargod, 1931.

*T. ulmifolia*, L. var. *elegans*, Urb. M.H. No. 93548. Collected by J. Sakharam Rao and D. Daniel Sundararaj, near Quilon, 1950.

**Key to the Genus:** Annual or perennial, attaining a height of 3 to 5 feet, with alternate leaves, with two glands at the base of the leaf blade. Stipules small or no stipules. Flowers are regular, hermaphrodite, solitary and the pedicels of flowers are adnate to the petiole of the leaves. Bracteoles two, prominent, sepals 5, petals 5, stamens 5, anthers oblong with longitudinal dehiscence. Ovary one-celled with parietal placentation. Fruit a capsule, ovules arranged two-seriate.

**Key to the Species and Varieties.** Leaves elliptic-lanceolate, very coarsely serrate, 2 to 3 inches with two glands at the base of the leaf-blade. Petiole .5 to .75". Pair of bracts .5" to .75", lanceolate and .1" broad. Flowers are bright yellow in colour.

*T. ulmifolia*, L.

Leaves elliptic lanceolate, longer than *T. ulmifolia*, L. 4" to 5" irregularly serrate, with two glands at the junction of the petiole and the leaf blade. Petiole upto 1" or more. Flowers are more orange than yellow and bracteoles two, .75 to 1.25" long and .2" to .3" broad, with serrate margin.

*T. ulmifolia*, L. var. *angustifolia*, Willd.

Leaves small 1" to 1.75" roundish, more or less crenate with two glands at the base of the leaf blade, petiole very short .25" to .4". Flowers are whitish yellow with dark violet area in the inner lower part of the petals. Bracteoles linear upto, .75" long.

*T. ulmifolia*, L. var. *elegans*, Urb.

#### REFERENCES

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