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More on *Himalayacalamus falconeri*

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It may be worth noting here that a location for the type of *Himalayacalamus falconeri* has recently turned up on an isotype in Edinburgh. Munro when describing the species stated that the location for Wallich 5040 was not known. While the holotype at Kew only has Nepal written on it, Sheopore 18th March 1821 (Shivapuri, Kathmandu valley) is clearly written on a Wallich 5040 sheet in Edinburgh.

This is interesting as the type has no vegetative material, and the vegetative component of Munro's description was based upon a collection from Kumaon, 350 miles to the west in Uttar Pradesh. Gamble later added some collections from Sikkim, 200 miles to the east, giving a very broad delimitation of the species. This may partially explain why the name *falconeri* has come to be used in a generic sense, now formalised as *Himalayacalamus* Keng. Another species name, *falcata*, has suffered a similarly chequered history, and it is now often applied in a generic sense, covering the genus *Drepanostachyum* Keng.

To home in on the species *falconeri* as typified by Wallich 5040, it is useful to consider what species are on and around Shivapuri. There are two *Himalayacalamus* species in the Kathmandu valley. One is cultivated all across the valley, including the base of Shivapuri, and is simply called tite nigalo (bitter small bamboo). It has long fimbriate culm sheath ligules. The other has a restricted distribution in the valley, and is only found on Phulchowki, a mountain 15 miles to the south. It is called thudi nigalo (no meaning), and has attractive yellow and purple stripes on new culm sheaths. Two further species are found 20 miles to the north of Shivapuri, *malinge nigalo*, with short culm internodes and nodes which are scarcely raised at all, and *seto nigalo*, which has prominently ridged internodes. A further species *Fargesia gyirongensis* Yi lies just over the border in Tibet.

The flowers of the *Himalayacalamus* species at the base of Shivapuri, tite nigalo, are not known. The flowers of thudi nigalo are very similar to those of Wallich 5040, but to complicate matters this species has not been found on Shivapuri. The flowers of seto nigalo and *Fargesia gyirongensis* knock these two species out of the running by having scabrous lemmas. The flowers of malinge nigalo are also not known. Thus only when tite nigalo and malinge nigalo have flowered can we be sure which species is the real *falconeri* Munro.

This sort of problem plagues bamboo taxonomy, and explains why there is so much indecision and controversy over nomenclature. Fortunately for those intrigued by such problems, the bamboos tite nigalo and malinge nigalo, as well as seto nigalo, have now been introduced to

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the UK, thanks to the diligent collections of Merlyn Edwards. They are being given the names, *H fimbriatus*, *aequatus*, and *porcatus* respectively. In this world of short-term research, the question is, by the time they flower will anyone remember what their significance is, or care? This is where a society such as the EBS GB comes into its own, and its role in sustaining long-term interest in bamboos as well as long-term stewardship of bamboo collections is becoming increasingly important.