Synopsis of the genus *Vitex* (Lamiaceae) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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**INTRODUCTION**

The genus *Vitex* L. (Linnaeus 1753: 638 “938”) comprises some 250 species almost all in tropical regions (Mabberley 2017). Until recently, *Vitex* was classified in Verbenaceae, subfamily Viticoideae (Briquet 1895). Harley et al. (2004) conclusively showed that Viticoideae are better placed in Lamiaceae. Very recently, subfamily Viticoideae has been restricted to three genera by new molecular phylogenetic evidence (Li et al. 2016). *Vitex* is the only genus of the subfamily present in Africa.

The genus *Vitex* awaits revision in Africa (Cabral 2013). The most comprehensive account is still Pieper’s (1928) revision. Moldenke compiled much information in his “Materials towards a monograph of the genus *Vitex*”, which has not always contributed to taxonomic clarification (Moldenke 1955a, 1955b, 1956, 1957, 1958a, 1958b). *Vitex* has recently been revised for the *Flora of Tropical East Africa* (FTEA) (Verdcourt 1992), and for *Flora Zambesiaca* (FZ) (Sales 2001, 2005). For the Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R. Congo), the most recent account of *Vitex* dates back to De Wilde man (1929a). In order to prepare the treatment of the genus *Vitex* for the *Flore d’Afrique centrale* (FAC; see Sosef 2016), I have revised all the material from D.R. Congo. During that work, a number of taxonomic and nomenclatural issues had to be solved, with implications beyond the borders of FAC, an account of which is given in the present note.

I present here a key to the species, and a check-list with a revised synonymy. When my taxonomic treatment departs from FZ and FTEA, a concise justification is provided. New combinations are coined when necessary and new synonyms are reported. Lectotypifications were necessary in a number of cases. For each taxon, a brief description is provided, focused on diagnostic traits. Detailed accounts of the taxa, including citation of specimens studied, will be published in the *Flore d’Afrique centrale*.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

All the relevant material from D.R. Congo in BM, BR, BRLU, COI, K, P, POZG, WAG has been examined. Additional specimens were investigated using the JSTOR Global Plants facility (http://plants.jstor.org). This material was supplemented with my own collections and field observations made in Upper Katanga between 2012 and 2016. Twenty-nine names have been found that are typified by specimens collected in D.R. Congo. All the specimens cited have been seen except otherwise stated (n.v.).
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In total, 21 taxa are recognized for the study area, i.e. 17 species, 1 subspecies, 3 varieties.

Two taxa are new to the D.R. Congo (\textit{V. ciliata}, \textit{V. fischeri} var. \textit{kienensis}). Four taxa (3 species, 1 variety) are endemic to the D.R. Congo (\textit{Vitex agelaefolia} var. \textit{rufula}, \textit{V. discoideoglanslulosa}, \textit{V. djumaensis}, \textit{V. rubroaurantiaca}). Two other taxa are subendemic, i.e. have most of their range in D.R. Congo (\textit{Vitex congolensis} var. \textit{thomassii}, \textit{V. cuspidata}). Two new combinations are made (\textit{Vitex congolensis} var. \textit{thomassii}, \textit{V. fischeri} var. \textit{kienensis}).

Nine new synonyms are proposed. A lectotype is designated for 17 names and a second-step lectotype for one name.

Synonymy is restricted to names that have been used in the literature for material collected in D.R. Congo. Voucher specimens are cited only for taxa that are new to D.R. Congo. Fruit colour is mentioned only if not black. Full descriptions of taxa and citation of representative material will be published in the \textit{Flore d’Afrique centrale}.

\textbf{1. Vitex agelaefolia} Mildbr. ex W.Piep. (Pieper 1928: 55; 1929: 162); Moldenke (1955a: 160); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524). – Type: Equatorial Guinea, Tessmann 289 (lecto-, designated by Pieper (1929): B†; isolecto-: BM barcode BM001209283 (fragm.)).

\textbf{1a. Vitex agelaefolia} var. \textit{agelaefolia}

\textit{Vitex phaseolifolia} Mildbr. ex W.Piep. (Pieper 1928: 55; 1929: 161); Moldenke (1955: 58); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525). – Type: Cameroon, Sûdkameruner Waldgebiet, vor der Station Ebolowa auf freigeschlagenem Gelände, Mildbraed 7623 (lecto-, designated by Pieper (1929): B†).

\textbf{Vitex wellensii} De Wild. (De Wildeman 1929a: 19); Moldenke (1958b: 222); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: D.R. Congo, Kanga, 30 Apr. 1921, Wellsens 110 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905567, designated here), synon. nov.

A myrmecophilous liana, with quadrangular hollow twigs. Leaflets: 3; 4–5 pairs of secondary veins. Inflorescence thyrsoid. Fruit glbose, c. 9 mm in diameter, orange-brown.

\textbf{Distribution} – W of Central Africa, from Gabon to D.R. Congo.

\textbf{Note} – Lectotypification of \textit{Vitex wellensii} De Wild. The protologue cites Gillet s.n., Vermoesen 1556, Vermoesen 1652, Wellsens 110. All the original material matches the description given there. Wellsens 110 is selected because it has well developed inflorescences and De Wildeman’s handwriting on the label.

\textbf{1b. Vitex agelaefolia} var. \textit{rufula} Moldenke (Moldenke 1952: 58). – Type: D.R. Congo, Kapanga, Mar. 1934, Overlaet 1263 (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008903655; iso-: BR barcode BR0000008903631, NY barcode NY00138416).

This variety is quite distinct by the ferruginous pubescence of the petioles and inflorescence axes.

\textbf{Distribution} – Endemic to D.R. Congo.

\textbf{2. Vitex buchananii} Baker ex Gürke (Gürke 1895: 339); Baker (1900: 319); Pieper (1928: 53); White (1962: 371); Verducourt (1992: 54); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); Sales (2001: 191; 2005: 75); Coates Palgrave & Coates Palgrave (2005: 981); Meerts (2016: 231). – Type: Malawi, Buchanan 782 (holo-: B†; iso-: G barcode G00016805, US barcode US00119244).

\textbf{Vitex robynsii} De Wild. (De Wildeman 1929a: 13); Moldenke (1957: 116). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga, Kasenga, vers 970 m, savane arbustive, 8 Apr. 1926, Robyns 1913 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906168, designated by Moldenke in schedis; isolecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906151).

A sarmentose shrub, not myrmecophilous; twigs pubescent, solid. Leaflets 5, pubescent on both surfaces. Inflorescence of thyrses grouped in a terminal panicle. Fruit c. 6–8 mm diam., with golden-yellow outer layer exfoliating at maturity; calyx cupuliform, clasping fruit base.

\textbf{Distribution} – Tropical E Africa, from Tanzania to Mozambique southwards and to D.R. Congo westwards.

\textbf{3. Vitex ciliata} Pierre ex Pellegr. (Pellegrin 1927: 268); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524). – Type: Gabon, Région du Nyanga, Mayombé, Bayaka, Tchibanga, 2 Mar. 1914, Le Testu 1701 (lecto-: P barcode P00442307 designated here; isolecto-: P barcodes P00442308 & P00442309).

A tree. Twigs chocolate brown, with sparse yellow cilia. Leaflets 5; petiolule 0–2(–3) mm; lamina strongly spathulate, cuspidate, with sparse fine yellowish hairs on veins beneath. Inflorescence a large multiflorous long pedunculate dichasium equalling leaves. Calyx c. 2 mm; corolla whitish. Fruit obovoid, 10–15 mm long.

\textbf{Distribution} – W of Central Africa, from Gabon to D.R. Congo. This species is new to D.R. Congo. Voucher: Mayumbe, Mbenge, s.d., Bittremieux 244 (BR barcode BR0000018425963).

\textbf{Note} – Lectotypification of \textit{Vitex ciliata} Pierre ex Pellegr. The protologue cited Le Testu 1701 and Klaine 3257; three sheets of the former and three sheets of the latter have been found, which all match the description in the protologue. I designate one of the most complete specimens as the lectotype.

\textbf{4. Vitex congolensis} De Wild. & T.Durand (Durand & De Wildeman 1899: 134); Baker (1900: 325); De Wildeman & Durand (1900: 50); Durand & Durand (1909: 437); De Wildeman (1910b: 401; 1912b: 142, 242; 1929a: 7); Pieper (1928: 59); Pauwels (1993: 216); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); Meerts (2016: 231). – Type: D.R. Congo, Bas-Congo, Bokakata, Feb. 1896, Dewèvre 770a (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905918, designated here; isolecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905871).

\textbf{4a. Vitex congolensis} var. \textit{congolensis}

\textit{Vitex aesculifolia} Baker (Baker 1900: 325); Durand & Durand (1909: 436). – Type: D.R. Congo, Monbuttu, near Munsa, 7 Apr. 1870, Schweinfurth 3442 (holo-: K).
Key to the species of Vitex in D.R. Congo

1. Leaflets coarsely dentate or crenate, at least in upper third ......................................................... 2
1’. Leaflets entire ........................................................................................................................................ 3

2. Leaflets 5; lamina narrowly elliptic, long acuminate, thin and papery; rainforest tree........................ 13. V. oxycuspis
2’. Leaflets 1–3(−5); lamina obovate, rounded at tip, thick and coriaceous; savanna shrub.................... 11a. V. madiensis subs. madiensis

3. Cymules arranged in thyrses, often grouped in panicles; fruit globose, 5–9 mm in diameter .............. 4
3’. Cymules arranged in compound dichasia; fruit ovoid, (7−)10–40 mm long ........................................ 7

4. Leaflets 5; secondary veins 7–9 on each side; thyrses mostly grouped in a terminal panicle ............ 5
4’. Leaflets 3; secondary veins 4–5 on each side; thyrses mostly in the axils of leaves ................................ 1. V. agelaeifolia

5. Fruit with golden-yellow glandulose outer layer exfoliating at maturity; fruiting calyx cupuliform, clasping base of fruit ................................................................................................................. 2. V. buchananii
5’. Fruit brownish, without a golden-yellow outer layer; fruiting calyx patelliform, not clasping fruit base ........................................................................................................................................... 6

6. Twigs pubescent, solid, not myrmecophilous, quickly becoming terete; leaflets pubescent on both surfaces ........................................................................................................................................ 6. V. discoideoglandulosa
6’. Twigs glabrous to puberulous, hollow, inhabited by ants, strongly quadrangular; lower surface of leaflets almost glabrous ........................................................................................................ 17. V. thyrsiflora

7. Ovary hirsute-tomentose ...................................................................................................................... 8
7’. Ovary glabrous, glandulose, or, rarely, with short stiff hairs at top ..................................................... 13

8. Leaves in verticils of three; leaflets almost glabrous except ciliate domatia; fruit < 9(−10) mm long.... 10. V. oxycuspis
8’. Leaves opposite (very rarely verticillate); leaflets glabrous or pubescent; fruit > 9 mm long .......... 9

9. Leaflets glabrous, shiny above, coriaceous, petiolulate, mostly rounded at tip (more rarely with a short blunt acumen) ................................................................. 8. V. doniana
9’. Leaflets variously pubescent, dull, petiolulate or sessile, rounded or acuminate ............................... 10

10. Leaflets markedly cuspidate or acuminate; upper surface of lamina glabrous, except on main vein.... 11
10’. Leaflets rounded to obtuse at tip; upper surface of lamina pubescent ............................................. 12

11. Peduncle 0.5–3 cm; cyme few-flowered, branched at 2 to 4 nodes, much shorter than subtending leaf, branches obovate pubescent; leaflet upper surface blackish-green in herbarium, smooth; lower surface with short obovate hairs on veins; bracts narrowly elliptic, discolorous, obovate tomentose beneath ................................................................. 9. V. ferruginea
11’. Peduncle 5–11 cm; cyme very lax, branched at 5 to 7 nodes, equalling subtending leaf; leaflet upper surface green to brownish in herbarium, very slightly scabridulous; lower surface softly tomentellous; bracts linear, concolorous ........................................................................................................ 5. V. cuspidata

12. Corolla 10–15 mm long, with long-protruding stamens; inflorescence few-flowered, 2–4 cm wide, lax; lower surface of leaflets yellowish pubescent, the indumentum not masking areolae ......................... 12. V. monbassae
12’. Corolla 6–10 mm long, stamens not protruding; inflorescence many-flowered, 3–10 cm wide, cymules often compact; lower surface of leaflets densely greyish floccose-velvety, the indumentum masking areolae ........................................................................ 14. V. payos

13. Calyx, pedicels and petiole with long patent fulvous to ferrugineous hairs, most of them exceeding 0.5 mm; leaflets with soft spreading hairs on lower surface and shorter erect hairs on upper surface ................................................................. 4. V. congolensis
13’. Calyx, pedicels and petiole without patent fulvous to ferrugineous hairs, puberulent or tomentose; leaflets almost glabrous to pubescent ........................................................................ 14
14. Leaves glabrous (except for a few short hairs on lower surface of mid-vein); inflorescence < 5 cm (including peduncle), few-flowered; corolla ≥ 10 mm long, orange, more rarely white.................................16. V. rubra o saurantiaca

14’. Leaves more or less pubescent; inflorescence 5–20 cm long, many-flowered, corolla < 10 mm long, white, purplish or bluish .................................................................15

15. Flowering calyx obliquely subtruncate, slightly zygomorphic, with obsolete teeth (< 0.5 mm long); inflorescence branches and calyx with a very short dense tomentellum of greyish-beige to ochraceous-beige curly hairs; secondary veins 15–25 pairs; tertiary veins prominent on lower surface (but often masked by indumentum), forming a conspicuous ladder-like pattern; leaflets widest at the middle or below the middle; petiolules 10–30 mm; bracts discolorous, beige-ochraceous tomentose on lower surface, glabrous on upper surface.................................................................10. V. fischeri

15’. Flowering calyx not zygomorphic, with well-developed teeth; inflorescence branches and calyx puberulent or pubescent, but not densely beige tomentose; secondary veins 8–20 pairs; tertiary veins not forming a conspicuous ladder pattern (except V. ciliata); leaflets generally widest above the middle, sessile or petiolulate; bracts not markedly discolorous.................................................................16

16. Upper surface of leaflets markedly scabrid, with reticulum prominulent; leaflets very coriaceous; calyx 2.5–3.5 mm long with broadly triangular teeth; corolla 5–10 mm long, bluish or mauve with white throat; savanna shrub.................................................................11b. V. madiensis subsp. milanjensis

16’. Upper surface of leaflets not scabrid (or slightly so), with reticulum not prominent; leaflets not remarkably coriaceous; calyx 1.5–2.5 mm long with narrow triangular teeth; corolla < 5 mm long, whitish-cream sometimes with a blue tinge in lower lip (corolla unknown in V. cuspidata); trees of woodlands and forests.................................................................17

17. Leaflets softly tomentellose on veins and reticulum beneath, without conspicuous glands; inflorescence branches and petiole tomentellose; leaflets narrowly elliptic to oblanceolate, 2.5–3.5 cm wide, abruptly contracted into a short acumen; petiolule 3–17 mm; flowers unknown; dry woodland tree. .................................................................5. V. cuspidata

17’. Leaflets only sparsely puberulous on main veins beneath, conspicuously yellow gland-dotted; inflorescence branches and petiole puberulent to almost glabrous; leaflets 3–6.5 cm wide, variable in shape; rainforest trees.................................................................18

18. Leaflets spathulate, broadly rounded at tip, cuspidate; petiolules 0–2(–3) mm; secondary veins 9–12 pairs; calyx with yellowish-fulvous hairs, without conspicuous glands; young twigs with golden yellow hairs.................................................................3. V. ciliata

18’. Leaflets elliptic or obovate, with a long fine acumens (5–20 mm); petiolules 5–25 mm; secondary veins 10–20 pairs; calyx pubescent, with conspicuous golden yellow glands; young twigs puberulent, without long golden yellow hairs.................................................................15. V. rivularis

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**Vitex seretii** De Wild. (De Wildeman 1909: 130); Pieper (1928: 59); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: D.R. Congo, Kimuenza, May 1901, Gillet 2163 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008903662, designated here; isolecto-: BR0000008906212), synon. nov.

**Vitex thomneri** De Wild. (De Wildeman 1911: 246); De Wildeman (1912a: 467; 1912b: 216; 2162; 1929a: 16); Pieper (1928: 59); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: D.R. Congo, Upper Wango, Banza-Biville [Mobayi-Mbongo], à 450 m d’altitude dans les brousse, parmi les rochers, 8 Mar. 1909, Thonner 263 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906540, designated here; isolecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906243 & BR0000008906250, W barcode W 1911-0005189, K barcode K00192755 & K00192756), synon. nov.

**Vitex gilletii** Gürke (Gürke 1903: 298); De Wildeman (1903b: 72; 1912a: 467; 1912b: 91, 242); Durand & Durand (1909: 437); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524). – **Vitex congolensis** De Wild. & T.Durand var. gilletii (Gürke) W.Piep. (Pieper 1928: 59). – Type: D.R. Congo, Kimuenza, May 1901, Gillet 2163 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008903662, designated here).

A tree. Young twigs, petiole and inflorescence with long spreading ferrugineous or fulvous fine hairs. Leaflets 5; petiolule 0–5 mm; lamina softly fulvous pubescent beneath. Inflorescence a dichasium on a long peduncle; calyx 1.5–2.5 mm, ferrugineous to fulvous pubescent; ovary glabrous; corolla 5–7 mm, cream with bluish lower lip. Fruit 10–15 mm long.

**Distribution** – W and C Africa, from Ivory Coast southwards to Angola and eastwards to Sudan.

**Notes** – Lectotypification of **Vitex congolensis** De Wild. The protologue cited only one collection (Dewèvre s.n.). The material stored at BR comprise Dewèvre 770a (2 sheets) and Dewèvre 926a (3 sheets); one sheet has locality description and notes handwritten by De Wildeman (BR0000008905918); it is here chosen as the lectotype.
De Wild. Only one of Hiern.; isolecto-: BR barcodes BR0000008905857, De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914a: 141; 1914c: was synonymized (Meerts f. De Wild. (De Wildeman 1909: 129) nom. is a member of the complex consist of four sheets; the sheet De Wild. (1956: 420); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga. Vallée de Kapiari, Feb. 1913, Homblé 1152 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905864 designated here; isolecto-: BR barcodes BR0000008905857, BR0000008905932 & BR00000089052925)., synon. nov. A tree. Twigs shortly pale brownish tumentellous. Leaflets 5; petiolules 3–17 mm; lamina narrowly obovate-elliptic, shortly acuminate-cuspidate, pale fulvous tumentellous on veins beneath, glabrous above. Inflorescence of dichasia, long pedunculate, much branched. Flowers unknown. Fruit 10–15 mm long. Distribution – Subendemic to D.R. Congo, extending to Angola. Notes – Vitex cuspidata Hiern is known from very few collections mostly from Angola, all of them in fruit (Cabral 2013). Pubescence of ovary is unknown and, accordingly, the species keys out in two groups in the key. Material from the Sudanian region has also been ascribed to that taxon (Au-bréville 1950: 500) but it is certainly not conspecific. The type material of Vitex kapiensis is a good match of the type material of Vitex cuspidata, with a large inflorescence, relatively small fruits, long-petiolute elliptic leaflets contracted into a short acumen. Vitex kapiensis was synonymized (Meerts 2016) with V. fischeri, but the latter has much larger leaflets and tertiary veins forming a more conspicuous ladder pattern. Lectotypification of Vitex kapiensis De Wild. The type material of Vitex kapiensis consist of four sheets; the sheet with the most complete material and the most extensive collecting information is selected as the lectotype. 6. Vitex discoideoglandulosa De Wild. (De Wildeman 1929a: 10). – Type: D.R. Congo, Kasaï, entre Lubue et Bena-Makima, May 1910, Sapin s.n. (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000018421408, designated here). Vitex guerkeana De Wild. (De Wildeman 1909: 129) nom. illeg. non Vitex guerkeana Hiern. A lianescent shrub. Twigs solid, not myrmecophilous, pubescent. Leaflets 5, petiolulate, lamina pubescent on both surfaces. Inflorescence of thyrses, grouped in a terminal panicle. Flowers whitish. Fruit globose, brownish, c. 5 mm, sub-tended by the patelliform calyx. Distribution – Endemic to D.R. Congo. Note – V. discoideoglandulosa is a member of the complex of V. thrysiflora-V. buchananii, characterised by a thyrsoidal inflorescence, more or less lianescent habit and small globose fruits (section Terminales W.Piep.). Pieper (1928) regarded it as a synonym of V. volkensii Gürke, an East African plant now synonymized with V. buchananii. However, V. dis-
Table 1 – Trait comparison of *V. discoidoeglandulosa*, *V. thyrsiflora* and *V. buchananii* in D.R. Congo.

|                      | *V. discoidoeglandulosa* | *V. thyrsiflora* | *V. buchananii* |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Young branches       | persistently pubescent, soon terete, solid, not myrmecophilous | puberulent, soon glabrescent, persistently quadrangular, hollow, myrmecophilous | persistently pubescent, soon terete, solid, not myrmecophilous |
| Leaflets             | pubescent on both surfaces | glabrous to puberulent on nerves; upper surface scabrid | pubescent on both surfaces |
| Fruit                | brown, without outer layer | brown, without outer layer | with golden-yellow glandular outer layer |
| Fruiting calyx       | patelliform               | patelliform      | cupuliform, clasping fruit base |

*V. discoidoeglandulosa* lacks the diagnostic trait of *V. buchananii*, i.e. the golden-yellow glandulose outer fruit layer exfoliating at maturity. It is undoubtedly a distinct species. Table 1 summarizes the differences between the three species.

Lectotypification of *Vitex discoidoeglandulosa* De Wild. De Wildeman (1929a) cited six syntypes (Claessens s.n., Gillet 1973, Gillet s.n. (coll. 1901), Gillet s.n. (coll. 1902), Gillet s.n. (coll. 1926), Sapin s.n.), corresponding to six sheets in BR. The only specimen with fruits is selected as the lectotype, because the characters of the fruits are discriminant with respect to *V. buchananii*.

7. *Vitex djumaensis* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1909: 128); Pieper (1928: 70); Moldenke (1955b: 321); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); Cabral (2013: 199). – Type: D.R. Congo, Vallée de la Djuma, Jul. 1902, Gentil s.n. (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905543 designated by Cabral (2013); isoleceto-: BR barcode BR00000089055292).

A small tree. Leaves in whorls of 3. Leaf glabrous except for ciliate domatia; leaflets 5; petiolules 3–17 mm; lamina coriaceous, acute or shortly acuminate. Inflorescence of dichasia; peduncle short (< 2 cm), calyx 2 mm, ovary hairy. Fruit small c. 9 × 7 mm.

**Distribution** – Endemic to D.R. Congo.

**Note** – *V. djumaensis* is related to *Vitex doniana* (glabrous leaves, petiolulate leaflets, pubescent ovary). It has an original combination of traits, i.e. ternate leaves, leaflets with few secondary veins (6–10 pairs), small fruit, and ciliate domatia. *Vitex djumaensis* is endemic to southern D.R Congo. It is a poorly known taxon. All the specimens cited by Moldenke (1955b) are misidentifications. New specimens have been found, from Bas-Congo, Kasaï and W Katanga, which had been previously misidentified as *V. doniana*.

8. *Vitex doniana* Sweet (Sweet 1826: 323); Baker (1900: 323); Pieper (1928: 64); White (1962: 371); Huber et al. (1963: 446); Verdcourt (1992: 62); Pauwels (1993: 216); (Beentje 1994: 622); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); van Wyk & van Wyk (1997: 476); Sales (2001: 192; 2005: 85); Coates Palgrave & Coates Palgrave (2005: 981); Latham & Konda ku Mbuta (2010: 326); Meerts & Hasson (2016: 335); Meerts (2016: 231). – Type: Sierra Leone, *Don* s.n. (holo-: BM barcode BM000839716).

*Vitex cuneata* Thonn. (Schumacher 1827: 289); Baker (1900: 328); De Wildeman (1926: 205; 1929a: 8; 1929b: 101); Pieper (1928: 71); Delevoy (1929: 478). – Type: Guinea [Ghana], *Thonning* 244 (holo-: C barcode C10004694; iso-: S barcode S10-29263, LE barcode LE00016530).

*Vitex cienkowskii* Kotschy & Peyr. (Kotschy & Peyritsch 1867: t. 12); Durand & Durand (1909: 436); De Wildeman (1912a: 467; 1921: 164; 1926: 205); Delevoy (1931: 7). – Type: South Sudan, ad Mischra Requ prope Bahr Ghasal, Apr. 1863, *von Heuglin* 41 [spalhm. “43” in protologue] (lecto-: W barcode W 2004-0012683 designated by Cabral (2013); isoleceto-: W barcodes W 2004-0012682, W 2004-0012684 & W 2004-0012681).

*Vitex dewevrei* De Wild. & T.Durand (Durand & De Wilde man 1899: 133); De Wildeman & Durand (1900: 50; 1901: 185); Baker (1900: 327); De Wildeman (1909: 128; 1912b: 91); Durand & Durand (1909: 437). – Type: D.R. Congo, Bas-Congo, Lukungu, 31 Oct. 1895, *Dewèvre* 459 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905475 designated by Cabral (2013); isoleceto-: BR barcodes BR0000008905437 & BR0000008905482). – Type: [Probably Angola], Lunda, *Pogge* 1255 (holo-: B, n.v.).

*Vitex dewevrei* De Wild. & T.Durand (Durand & De Wilde man 1899: 133); De Wildeman & Durand (1900: 50; 1901: 185); Baker (1900: 327); De Wildeman (1909: 128; 1912b: 91); Durand & Durand (1909: 437). – Type: D.R. Congo, Bas-Congo, Lukungu, 31 Oct. 1895, *Dewèvre* 459 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905475 designated by Cabral (2013); isoleceto-: BR barcodes BR0000008905437 & BR0000008905482). – Type: [Probably Angola], Lunda, *Pogge* 1255 (holo-: B, n.v.).

*Vitex homblei* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914a: 142; 1914c: 404; 1921: 164). – Type: D.R. Congo, Elisabethville [Lubumbashi], May 1912, *Homblé* 318 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905475 designated by Cabral (2013); isoleceto-: BR barcodes BR0000008905437 & BR0000008905482).

*Vitex lundensis* Gürke (Gürke 1893: 168); Durand & Schinz (1896: 25); Baker (1900: 327); Durand & Durand (1909: 437); De Wildeman (1912b: 280); Pieper (1928: 73); Moldenke (1956: 448); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525). – Type: D.R. Congo, Lulu river, Lunda, 17 May 1892, *Pogge* 1260 (B†).

*Vitex poggei* Gürke (Gürke 1893: 168); Durand & Schinz (1896: 25); Baker (1900: 329); Durand & Durand (1909: 437); Pieper (1928: 73); Moldenke (1957: 80); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525). – Type: [Probably Angola], Lunda, *Pogge* 1255 (holo-: B, n.v.).

*Vitex homblei* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914a: 142; 1914c: 404; 1921: 164). – Type: D.R. Congo, Elisabethville [Lubumbashi], May 1912, *Homblé* 318 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008905475 designated by Cabral (2013); isoleceto-: BR barcodes BR0000008905437 & BR0000008905482). – Type: [Probably Angola], Lunda, *Pogge* 1255 (holo-: B, n.v.).

A tree. Twigs fulvous to greyish puberulent. Leaves glabrous; leaflets 5, long petiolulate; lamina very coriaceous, shiny above, generally rounded at tip. Inflorescence of dichasia, generally much shorter than leaves; calyx 3–4 mm, shortly pubescent; ovary hairy; corolla whitish with bluish lower lip. Fruit c. 25 mm long.
Distribution – Widespread in tropical and subtropical Africa; Madagascar, W of Indian Ocean.

Note – Very robust specimens of *V. doniana* with short inflorescence, occurring mostly in the rainforest region (e.g. Lejoly 4191 (BRLU), Dhetchuvi 1054 (BRLU)), resemble *V. grandifolia*, a species of W tropical Africa, not recorded from D.R. Congo. Unlike *V. grandifolia*, *V. doniana* is never associated to ants; *V. doniana* has a pale blue corolla with white throat (vs. a yellowish-brown corolla with red throat in *V. grandifolia*).

The type specimens of *V. lundensis* Gürke and *V. poggei* Gürke have not been seen, but the protologue and the subsequent descriptions based on the original material (Baker 1900; Pieper 1928) leave little doubt that both taxa belong here.

9. *Vitex ferruginea* Schumach. & Thonn. (Schumacher 1827: 228; Baker 1900: 324; Durand & Durand 1909: 437); Pieper (1928: 70); Huber et al (1963: 447); Verdcourt (1992: 66); (Beentje 1994: 622); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); Sales (2001: 193; 2005: 81); Coates Palgrave & Coates Palgrave (2005: 98); Cabral (2013: 211). – Type: Ghana, near Aquapim, *Thonning* 265 (lecto-: C barcode C10004696, designated here, isolecto-: C barcodes C10004697 & C10004695, FI barcode FI011043, S barcode S11-26315).

*Vitex welwitschii* Gürke (Gürke 1893: 166); Hierm (1900: 166); Baker (1900: 329); Pieper (1928: 69); De Wildeman (1929a: 20); Robyns (1947: 140); Moldenke (1956b: 223); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: Angola, Golongo Alto, *Welwitsch* 5644 (lecto-: K barcode K000249101 designated by Cabral (2013)).

*Vitex laurentii* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1909: 129; 1910a: 255; 1912b: 132). – *Vitex welwitschii var. laurentii* (De Wild.) W.Piep. (Pieper 1928: 69); Robyns (1947: 141); Moldenke (1958b: 223). – Type: D.R. Congo, Mogandjo, Mar. 1906, *Laurent* 1921 (lecto-: BR barcode BR00000058909305 designated by Cabral (2013), isolecto-: BR00000058909275).

A tree. Young twigs ochraceous pubescent. Leaflets 5; petiolule 3–12 mm; lamina narrowly elliptic, acuminate, upper surface glabrous and smooth, dark blackish green in herbarium; lower surface shortly ochraceous pubescent on veins. Inflorescence of dichasia, much shorter then subtending leaf, few-flowered; bracts narrowly elliptic, discolorous, ochraceous tomentose beneath, glabrous above; calyx 3–5 mm, densely ochraceous pubescent; corolla 8–12 mm; cream with mauve lower lip, stamens long protruding; ovary hairy. Fruit 15–35 mm long.

Distribution – Widespread in tropical Africa, southward to South Africa.

Note – Lectotypification of *Vitex ferruginea* Schumach. & Thonn. The three specimens of *Thonning* 265 in C (C barcodes C10004695, C10004696, C10004697) have to be considered as syntypes (Hepper 1976). The most complete specimen is selected as the lectotype (C barcode C10004696).

Lectotypification of *Vitex welwitschii* Gürke. The protologue describes flowers, not fruits. Cabral (2013) designated *Welwitsch* 5644 (K barcode K000249101), a flowering specimen, as the lectotype. *Welwitsch* 5644 is, however, an admixture of specimens collected at three dates, two with flowers and one with fruits (Hiern 1900). Therefore, as pointed out by Albuquerque et al. (2009), it is not recommended to consider sheets with the same number to be isolectotypes, in the case of Welwitsch’s collections. All the other remaining original material has therefore to be considered as syntypes (BM barcodes BM000834750 & BM000566971, COI barcode COI00077134, LISU barcodes LISU254232 & LISU223678, PRE barcode PRE0590365-0, C barcode C10001498).

10. *Vitex fischeri* Gürke (Gürke 1893: 171); Baker (1900: 330); Pieper (1928: 60); White (1962: 371); Verdcourt (1992: 59); (Beentje 1994: 622); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); Sales (2001: 195, 2005: 82); Meerts (2016: 231). – Types: Tanzania, Seeengebiet [Mwanza District], Kayenze [Kagehi], Nov. 1885, *Fischer* 476 (syn-: B†); Usindji [Uzina], *Stuhlmann* 3576 (syn-: B†); Kimsani [Kimwani] Plateau, *Stuhlmann* 3394 (syn-: B†); Muansa, *Stuhlmann* 4137, *Stuhlmann* 4184 (syn-: B†).

10a. *Vitex fischeri* var. *fischeri*

*Vitex bequaertii* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914a: 142; 1914c: 402; 1921: 164; 1929b: 101); Delevoy (1929: 478); Pieper (1928: 60). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga, Elisabethville [Lubumbashi], 4 Apr. 1912, *Bequaert* 314 [*319* in error in the protologue] (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000005570843, designated here, isolecto-: BR barcode BR0000005571178).

*Vitex gigiori* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1929b: 103); Moldenke (1956: 375). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga, Etoile du Congo, Jan. 1923, *De Giorgi* 391 (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008905826).

*Vitex venulosa* Moldenke (Moldenke 1952: 64; 1958b: 210); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: D.R. Congo, Manie, Puluma, Aug. 1932, *Lebrun* 5878 (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008905550; iso-: BR barcode BR0000008905574, P barcode P00442322).

A tree. Twigs greyish beige tomentellose. Leaves 5 foliolate; petiolules 11–30 mm; lamina elliptic, acuminate, upper surface glabrous, lower surface discolourous, greyish tomentose, 15–25 secondary veins, tertiary veins forming a ladder pattern. Inflorescence of dichasia, shorter than leaves, branches greyish beige tomentellose; calyx zygomorphic, teeth < 0.5 mm, with short greyish-beige tomentellum of crispate hairs. Fruit 10–15 mm long.

Distribution – Mostly E Africa, from Kenya southwards to Zambia and extending westwards to Angola.

Note – Lectotypification of *Vitex bequaertii* De Wild. The protologue cited *Homble* 202 and *Bequaert* 314 [*319*]. Both match the description in the protologue. *Bequaert* 314 (barcode BR0000005570843) is selected because it bears annotations in De Wildeman’s handwriting.

10b. *Vitex fischeri* var. *keniensis* (Turrill) Meerts, comb. nov.

*Vitex keniensis* Turrill, Diagnoses Africanae LXII: 47. 1915. (Turrill 1915); Pieper (1928: 60); Moldenke (1956: 420);
Vitex madiensis var. typica W.Piep. (Pieper 1928: 63); (Delevoy 1929: 483); De Wildeman (1929a: 11, 1929b: 105); Devred (1956: 113). – Type: same as Vitex camporum Bütt. 

Distribution – Widespread in tropical Africa.

Notes – Vitex madiensis subsp. madiensis is probably the most polymorphic Vitex taxon in Africa. Many morphotypes have received a formal taxonomic treatment; some of them have been reported in D.R. Congo by Moldenke (1956): V. madiensis var. schweinfurthii (Gürke) W.Piep. (5 leaflets; e.g. de Bergyck 34, Robyns 3018), V. madiensis var. baumii W.Piep. (leaflet margin entire; e.g. Lebrun 6748), V. madiensis var. glaberrima (glabrous in all parts; e.g. Pittery 819).

These taxa are not recognized here.

The distribution ranges of V. madiensis subsp. madiensis and subsp. milanjensis overlap broadly in southern D.R. Congo. Specimens with more or less intermediate characters, possibly of hybrid origin, are occasionally found, especially in savannas of Bas-Congo (e.g. Duvigneaud 252 Vi).

Lectotypification of Vitex camporum Bütt. Vitex camporum is based on three syntypes which have all been destroyed in Berlin (Büttner 427 & 428; Welwitsch 5728). Two duplicates of Welwitsch 5728 have been found in BM, and one duplicate of Büttner 427 has been found in K (K barcode K001008451); all the duplicates match the description in the protologue. Welwitsch 5728 is a better specimen and one of the two sheets is thus selected as the lectotype.

Lectotypification of Vitex camporum var. longipedicellata De Wild. De Wildeman cites one collection from Kwamouth by E. & M. Laurent, s.n., which corresponds to two sheets in BR. The sheet with collecting data on the label is chosen as the lectotype.

Lectotypification of Vitex schweinfurthii Gürke. The protologue cites two collections i.e. Schweinfurth 2030 & 2848. These specimens have been destroyed in Berlin. A duplicate of Schweinfurth 2030 matching the description in the protologue exists in K, and is here selected as the lectotype.

11b. Vitex madiensis subsp. milanjensis (Britten) F.White (White 1962: 455); Verdecourt (1992: 61); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524); Sales (2001: 197; 2005: 84); Coates Palgrave & Coates Palgrave (2000: 18430097). – Type: Malawi, Malanji [Mulanji], 6000 ft [1800 m], Oct. 1891, Whyte 138 (syn.: BM barcode BM001124551); Malawi,
Zomba, Sept. 1891, Whyte s.n. (syn.: BM barcode BM000566972; K barcode K000249031).

**Vitex grisea** Baker (Baker 1900: 325). – Type: Angola, Distr. Huilla, in silvestrius alte dumetosum de Catumba, *Welwitsch* 5759 (lecto-: K barcode K001067050, designated here; isolecto-: BM barcode BM000839718), *synon. nov.*

**Vitex huijizensis** Hiern (Hiern 1900: 837); De Wildeman (1914b: 191) nom. illeg.

**Vitex hockii** De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914b: 113; 1914c: 403; 1921: 164); Pieper (1928: 61); Delevoj (1929: 483). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga, Manika, Oct. 1911, *Hock* s.n. (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008906557).

**Vitex ringoetii** De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914a: 143; 1914c: 407; 1921: 165). – Type: D.R. Congo, Nieuwdorp, Oct. 1912, *Ringoet* 1 (holo-: BR barcode BR000005571505).

**Vitex epidictyodes** Mildbr. ex W.Piep. (Pieper 1928: 61; 1929: 164). – *Vitex madiensis* subsp. *milanjiensis* var. *epidictyodes* (W.Piep.) Verde. (Verdcourt 1992: 61); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525). – Type: Malawi, Langenburg, am nordende des Nyassa, *Stolz* 556 (First-step lectotype designated by Pieper (1929); second-step lectotype: B barcode B 10 0279988, designated here; isolecto-: BM barcode BM001125198, G barcode G00366697, P barcode P00713461, U barcode U0040942, Z barcode Z000067396).

Diffsers from the type subspecies by the following traits. A shrub. Twigs stout, often wine red. Leaves 5 foliolate; lamina abruptly contracted at tip and cuspidate, very coriaceous, entire; upper surface very scabrid, reticulum prominulent. **Distribution** – Zambezian region, from Angola eastwards to Tanzania and Mozambique.

**Notes** – Dwarf, geofrutescent forms of *V. madiensis* subsp. *milanjiensis* occur throughout the distribution range of subsp. *milanjiensis*. They have been repeatedly described as *V. hockii* De Wild., *V. ringoetii* De Wild., *V. epidictyodes* W.Piep., *V. caespitosa* Exell. Such forms pose two different taxonomic problems. First, it is unclear if they are genetically fixed or if, alternatively, they represent pyrophytic forms not deserving formal taxonomic recognition. Therefore, almost certainly used the duplicates deposited in K. This morphotype is a somewhat extreme variant in the phenetic variation space of the polymorphic *Vitex madiensis* subsp. *milanjiensis* not deserving formal taxonomic recognition.

12. **Vitex mombassae** Vatke (Vatke 1882: 533); Baker (1900: 326); De Wildeman (1903a: 121; 1912b: 367; 1921: 165; 1929b: 106); Durand & Durand (1909: 437); Pieper (1928: 66); Delevoj (1929: 484); White (1962: 371); Verdcourt (1992: 64); (Beentje 1994: 623); Bredenkamp & Botha (1996: 146); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525); van Wyk & van Wyk (1997: 476); Sales (2001: 197; 2005: 87); Smith & Allen (2004: 82); Coates Palgrave & Coates Palgrave (2005: 983); Meerts & Hasson (2016: 337); Meerts (2016: 231). – Type: “[Kenya] [Prope] Mombassa [in ora zanzibarensi],” Jan. 1876, Hildebrandt 1972 (lecto-: BM barcode BM000839709 designated by Cabral (2013)); isolecto-: K barcode K00192785, W barcode W 0008469.

**Vitex mufutu** De Wild. (De Wildeman 1914a: 142; 1914c: 406; 1921: 165). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga, Etoile du Congo, Dec. 1911, *Hock* s.n. (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008905451).

A shrub or a small tree. Young twigs orange to fulvous tomentose. Leaflets 3–5, petiolo 0(–5) mm; lamina obtuse to rounded at tip, pubescent on both surfaces. Inflorescence of dichasia, few flowered, branches yellowish pubescent; calyx 4–7 mm, yellowish woolly tomentose, corolla cream, mauve tinged, 10–20 mm, stamens very long protruding; ovary hairy; fruit c. 35 mm long.

**Distribution** – E and S Africa, from Kenya southwards to South Africa and westwards to D.R. Congo.

13. **Vitex oxyceps** Baker (Baker 1900: 326); Pieper (1928: 56); Moldenke (1957: 31; 1967: 314); Aubréville (1956: 232); Huber et al. (1963: 446); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525). – Type: Nigeria, Old Calabar River, Feb. 1863, Mann 2243 (holo-: K barcode K000192745). A small tree. Twigs almost glabrous. Leaves 3–5-foliolate; petiolo slender, with papilliforum hairs, petiolo 5–18 mm, lamina long acuminate, coarsely serrate, thin and membranaceous, almost glabrous or with short papilliforum hairs on veins. Inflorescence of dichasia, long pedunculate, few-flowered, branches with papilliforum hairs; calyx campanulate 2–3 mm, teeth 0.5–1 mm broadly triangular, puberulent; ovary glabrous; fruit c. 8 mm long.

**Distribution** – Tropical W and C Africa, from Guinea southwards to Angola.

14. **Vitex payos** (Lour.) Merr. (Merrill 1935: 334); Moldenke (1957: 45); Verdcourt (1992: 63); (Beentje 1994: 623); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525); van Wyk & van Wyk (1997: 478); (Sales 2001: 200; 2005: 86); Coates Palgrave & Coates Palgrave (2005: 985); Cabral (2013: 238); Meerts (2016: 231), nom. conserv. – Type: Tanzania, Tanga, Jan. 1893.
Vitex vermoe­
De Wild. 
Baker. Bakrubro­aurantiaca 
Vitex duboisii; 
Moldenke (Moldenke 1952: 62); Moldenke de Briey 
ininea 
BR0000009862159), and 
BM barcode BM001209279), 
Note 
Distribution – From Kenya southwards to Zimbabwe, and 
westwards to Angola. 

15. Vitex rivularis Gürke (Gürke 1903: 297); Pieper (1928: 1956); Aubréville (1956: 233); Huber et al. (1963: 446); Moldenke (1968: 34); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: Cameroun, Bipinde, am Lokundje-Ufer, 80 m, Apr. 1897, Zenker 1333 (holo-: B†, iso-: P barcodes P00442317, P00442318 & P00442319, BM barcode BM000834558, E barcodes E00214021 & E00193458, G barcodes G00023655 & G00023656, W barcode W 1898-0006745, HBG barcode HBG513570, K barcode K000192753, WU barcode WU 0069994, KFTA barcode KFTA 0002112). 

Vitex vermoesenii De Wild. (De Wildeman 1929a: 16; 1929b: 66) pro parte, excl. syntypes Pynaert 1696 (BR, BM), Sparano 129 (BR), Vermoesen 1733 (BR). – Type: D.R. Congo, Mayombe, Temvo, 6 Mar. 1919, Vermoesen 1742 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906588, designated here; isoelecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906595, BM barcode BM001209278), synon. nov. 

A tree. Twigs almost glabrous except at nodes. Leaves 5–7-foliolate; petiolo 10–20 cm, almost glabrous; petiololes 5–25 mm, lamina abruptly contracted into a long fine acumen, upper surface slightly scabrid, lower surface almost glabrous, with many yellow glands, (8–)11–20 pairs of secondary veins. Inflorescence of dichasia, much branched, long pedunculate, multiflorous; calyx 1.5–2 mm, with many yellow glands, corolla c. 4 mm, whitish, with lower lip purplish, ovary glandulate. Fruit 20–30 mm long. 

Distribution – W tropical Africa, from Ghana southwards to Angola. 

Note – Lectotypification of Vitex vermoesenii De Wild. Five syntypes are cited in the protologue (de Briey 55, Pynaert 1696, Sparano 129, Vermoesen 1724, Vermoesen 1933). They are an admixture of two species. Pynaert 1696 (BR barcodes BR0000009861466 & BR0000009861794, BM barcode BM001209279), Sparano 129 (barcode BR0000009862159), and Vermoesen 1933 (barcodes BR0000009862180 & BR0000009861817) are Vitex ferruginea Schumach. & Thonn. On the other hand, de Briey 55 (BR barcodes BR0000009861480 & BR0000009862173) and Vermoesen 1742 (BR barcodes BR0000008906588 & BR0000008906595, BM barcode BM001209278) are Vitex rivularis Gürke. The protologue describes Vitex vermoesenii as having “… calice de env. 1 mm de long, …” and “… inflorescence formant une panicule terminale ample…” “… inflorescences partielles axillaires atteignant 10 cm de diam.; …” (De Wildeman 1929a); all these characters clearly point to Vitex rivularis. Vermoesen 1742 (BR barcode BR0000008906588) is chosen as the lectotype because it has De Wildeman’s handwriting on the label. 

16. Vitex rubroaurantiaca De Wild. (De Wildeman 1929a: 15, as “rubro-aurantiaca”). – Type: D.R. Congo, entre Masisi et Walikale, 3 Jan. 1915, forêt vierge, Bequaert 6469 (lecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906236, designated here; isoelecto-: BR barcode BR0000008906175). 

Vitex duboisii Moldenke (Moldenke 1952: 60); Moldenke (1955b: 327); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 524). – Type: D.R. Congo, Kutu, Ekota territ., Tshuapa distr., Sept. 1934, Dubois 608 (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008906182; iso-: BR barcode BR0000008906199), synon. nov. 

Vitex lebrunii Moldenke (Moldenke 1952: 62); Moldenke (1956: 435); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 525). – Type: D.R. Congo, Entre Walikale et Koleke, Mar. 1932, Lebrun 5303 (holo-: BR barcode BR0000008905581; iso-: BR barcode BR0000008905604, K barcode K000192764, P barcode P00464225), synon. nov. 

A shrub, generally blackening in herbarium, almost glabrous in all its parts. Leaves 5-foliolate; petiolo 1–15 mm, lamina narrowly elliptic-oblancoateolate, long attenuate at base, acuminate, 5–10 secondary veins. Inflorescence of dichasia, few-flowered, much shorter then subtending leaf, peduncle < 30 mm, branches puberulous, compressed; calyx 2–3.5 mm, sparsely puberulous, corolla orange or whitish, 10–12 mm. Fruit c. 22 mm long, yellow. 

Distribution – Endemic to D.R. Congo. 

Notes – The type specimens of Vitex duboisii De Wild. and Vitex lebrunii Moldenke show the characteristic traits of Vitex rubroaurantiaca, i.e. glabrous leaves blackening in herbarium, very short peduncle, few-flowered inflorescence, yellow fruits. 

Lectotypification of Vitex rubroaurantiaca De Wild. One gathering is cited in the protologue (Bequaert 6469), represented in BR by two isotypes (BR barcodes BR0000008906236 & BR0000008906175). I select the sheet with De Wildeman’s handwriting on the label as the lectotype. 

17. Vitex thyrsiflora Baker (Baker 1895: 152; 1900: 319); Pieper (1928: 54); Moldenke (1958a: 152); Huber et al. (1963: 446); Lebrun & Stork (1997: 526). – Type: Nigeria, Interior of western Lagos, 1893, Rowland s.n. (lecto-: K barcode K000192742, designated here). 

A liana. Twigs strongly quadrangular, hollow, myrmecophilous. Leaves 5-foliolate, petiolo 8–10 mm, lamina with a fine acumen, 7–8 pairs of secondary veins, upper surface scabrid, lower surface almost glabrous, with many yellow glands. Inflorescence of thyrses in the axils of leaves and grouped in a terminal panicule; calyx truncate, 2–3 mm, corolla whitish, 4–6 mm; fruit globose, c. 7 mm, orange to blackish, subtended by patelliform calyx. 

Distribution – W tropical Africa, from Guinea to D.R. Congo. 

Note – Lectotypification of Vitex thyrsiflora Baker. Baker (1895) cites two specimens: Harrison s.n. (K barcode K000192741), and Rowland s.n. (K barcode K000192742).
Both match the protologue. The latter is a better preserved specimen and is therefore chosen as the lectotype.

**Doubtful records**

For four species reported from D.R. Congo by WCSP (2018) (i.e. *V. chrysoocarpa* Planch., *V. lokandjensis* W.Piep., *V. yaunensis* Gürke, *V. zekeri* Gürke), no material was found and those records probably rely on identification errors.

**Taxon excluded**

*Vitex lukauensis* De Wild. (De Wildeman 1903a: 121). – Type: D.R. Congo, Haut-Katanga, environs de Lukafu, *Verdick* 63 (holo.: BR barcode BR0000005104642), is *Schinzio-phyton rautanenii* (Schinz) Radcl.-Sm. (Euphorbiaceae).

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