

Zingiber zerumbet (L.) Sm.

Family:

Zingiberaceae

Smith, J.E. (1806) *Exotic Botany* 2: 105.

Common name:

Ginger, Zerumbet; Martinique Ginger; Zerumbet Ginger; Ginger, Martinique

Stem

Usually flowers and fruits as a shrubby plant about 1-2 m tall but it should be noted that only the leaves are above ground level. The true stem is below the soil surface.

Leaves

Leaf blades sessile or shortly petiolate (petioles about 0.4-0.5 cm) lanceolate, about 14-40 x 3-8 cm, glabrous on the upper surface but pubescent on the lower surface at least when young, ligule about 1-3 cm long, pubescent when young, apex obtuse.

Flowers

Inflorescence produced from the base of the plant. Inflorescence about 7 cm long, on a peduncle about 20-50 cm long. Bracts red, about 1.5-4 x 1.2-4 cm. Flowers smell like ginger (*Zingiber officinale*). Calyx about 13-17 mm long. Corolla tube about 20-30 mm long, lobes variable in size and shape, largest one about 15-25 x 10-20 mm. Labellum ovate or orbicular, about 12-20 x 15-20 mm. Anther about 8-10 mm long, crest or connective about 7 mm. Two gland-like stylodes (about 5 mm long) present on top of the ovary.

Fruit

Fruits produced in a reddish cone about 12-13 x 4 cm. Capsules enclosed in the persistent inflorescence bracts, capsules about 12 x 8 mm. Seeds about 4-5 x 2.5 mm. Aril translucent, fimbriate at the apex. Embryo about 3.5 mm long, one end globular.

Seedlings

Features not available.

Distribution and Ecology

An introduced species originally from Java, now naturalised in CYP with specimens collected from Bamaga and Badu Island. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 100 m. Grows in disturbed areas in rain forest and on abandoned agricultural land.

Natural History & Notes

This species may have medicinal properties.

This species is in cultivation in SE Asia for the edible ginger.

Synonyms

Amomum zerumbet L., *Species Plantarum*: 1(1753), Type: India, holo: ?. **Zingiber truncatum** Stokes, *Bot. mat. med.* 1: 68(1812). **Zingiber aromaticum** Valetton, *Bull. Jard. Bot. Buitenzorg* 27: 131(1918), Type: K. Heyne 38; Holo: L. **Zingiber amaricans** Blume, *Enum. pl. Javae*: 43(1827), Type: C.L. Blume, s.n.; Holo: L. **Amomum silvestre** Poir., *Encycl. suppl.* 5: 548(1817).

Amomum spurium (J. König) (J.F. Gmel., *Syst. nat.* 1: 6(1791). **Zingiber zerumbet** f. **australiana** F.M.Bailey, *Queensland Agricultural Journal* 15: 782(1905), Type: The plants now

(Dec., 1904) flowering in my sons garden at Toowong are from roots which I dug up at Polo Creek, Somerset, in June 1897. **Cardamomum spurium** (J. König) Kuntze, *Revis gen pl.* 2: 687(1891).

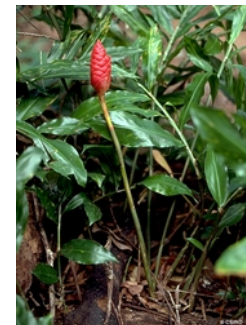
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Inflorescence and flower. ©

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Habit, leaves and inflorescence.

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