

10. MELOCANNA Trinius in Sprengel, *Neue Entdeck. Pflanzenk.* 2: 43. 1820 [“1821”].

梨竹属 li zhu shu

Xia Nianhe (夏念和); Chris Stapleton

Arborescent bamboo, moderately sized. Rhizome long necked, pachymorph. Culms diffuse or in open clumps, erect; internodes terete; wall thin; nodal ridge not prominent. Branches many, subequal. Culm sheaths persistent, shorter than internodes, distally corrugate, with external ligule; auricles absent; blade erect or basally erect, distally reflexed, sword-shaped, long. Leaves large, glabrous, transverse veins visible abaxially. Inflorescence fully bracteate, iterant, terminal. Pseudospikelets slightly compressed bilaterally, in clusters of 2–4 on flowering branches, with 1 fertile floret and 1 to several sterile florets. Rachilla articulate. Glumes 2–4, gemmiferous; lemma similar to glumes, ovate-lanceolate. Palea convolute, rounded. Lodicules 2. Stamens 6; filaments free or irregularly connate; anthers obtuse at apex. Ovary glabrous; style long, hollow; stigmas 2–4. Fruit pear-shaped, large, 5–13 cm, long beaked at apex; pericarp thick, fleshy, without endosperm, usually viviparous.

Two species: Bangladesh, India, Myanmar; one species (introduced) in China.

1. *Melocanna humilis* Kurz, *J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal*, Pt. 2, Nat. Hist. 42: 251. 1873.

梨竹 li zhu

Melocanna arundina C. E. Parkinson, nom. illeg. superfl.

Rhizome terete, to 5 m long, ca. 2.5 cm in diam., solid. Culms upright, with nodding tip, 8–20 m, 3–7 cm in diam.; internodes green initially, straw-colored when old, terete, (12–) 20–50 cm, slightly white powdery and pubescent initially, glabrous when old; wall 5–7.5 mm thick; nodal ridge not prominent; sheath scar evident. Branches many at upper nodes. Culm sheaths initially yellow-green, 10–15 cm, apex broadly concave, rigid, leathery, with deciduous, appressed, stiff, short, white hairs; uppermost part inflated; auricles inconspicuous; oral setae well developed; ligule short, serrulate at margin; blade erect, linear-triangular, 10–30 cm, base ca. 2.5 cm wide. Leaf sheaths glabrous; auricles tiny, usually absent; oral setae 8–10 per side, deciduous, white, undulate or curved, 8–15 mm; blade lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate, 15–24(–35) × 2.5–3.5 cm. Pseudospikelets in clusters of 3 or 4 in axils of bracts, ca. 1.3 cm, glabrous; bracts 2–4, lanceolate. Lemma ovate-lanceolate; palea convolute, not keeled; lodicules 2. Ovary globose, glabrous; style slender; stigmas 2–4, outcurved. Fruit pear-shaped, large, 4.5–12.5 × 5–7 cm, fleshy, apex with a long, curved beak.

Cultivated. Guangdong, Guangxi, Taiwan [native to Myanmar].

The only difference from *Melocanna baccifera* Kurz is apparently stature: *M. baccifera* is larger than *M. humilis*, although internode length and leaf sheath auricles also require comparison. *Melocanna humilis* was misidentified in FRPS (9(1): 13. 1996) as *M. baccifera*, for which name *M. bambusoides* is a widely used synonym. *Melocanna baccifera* is also in cultivation in Guangzhou.

The culms are used for pulping and are split for weaving, the leaves are used for making wine, and the fruit is edible.

Flora of China 22: 56–57. 2006.