

Calamus siamensis

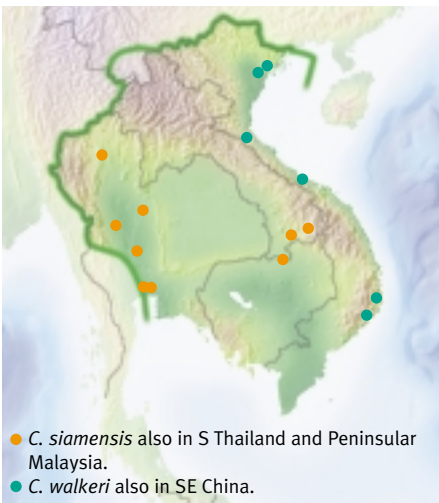
(wai khom, wai nam, wai deng, yo, re dark)

Climbing Clustering Flagellum Knee conspicuous

Widely cultivated in Thailand but not yet planted in Lao.

Look for:

- Sheath spines yellow with red tips when alive, ocrea tiny and not bristly.
- Leaflets very closely set in one plane, regular or interrupted pinnate in groups of 2–10.
- Leaflets with one line of pale based spines above.



Habitat

In Lao grows in scrub forest and degraded semi-evergreen forest at 100 m. In Thailand recorded at 0–300 m.

Fruiting and flowering months

Flowers in bud 3–4 (Thailand).
Fruit unripe 5 (Lao), 3–6 (Thailand).

Uses

Handicrafts: suitable.
Trade: suitable.
Shoot: edible.

Planting

None known in Lao. High potential. Widely planted for shoot production in NE Thailand.



Stem

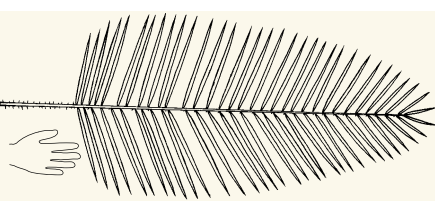
Stem up to 20 m long and 0.9–2 cm diameter.

Sheath 1.2–3 cm diameter.

Sheath greenish, sometimes with grey-brown indumentum.

Spines brownish to yellowish brown with reddish tip, 1–2.5 cm long, often with crescent bases.

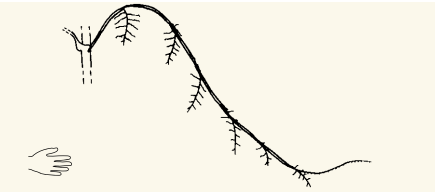
Ocrea tiny, dry, with no spines or bristles.



Whole **leaf** 0.8–1.2 m long.

Petiole of upper leaves 7–22 cm long, sometimes ≤ 5 cm on sheaths with inflorescences.

Largest leaflets 11–33 cm \times 1–2 cm. Leaflets regular on some leaves, interrupted pinnate on others. Above 1–3 prominent veins with pale-based bristles on one. Below sometimes a few bristles. Margins bristly. Rachis has straight spines 1–3 cm long below.



Inflorescence 0.6–1.6 m long plus flagellum. Branches pendulous.

Primary bracts entire, closely sheathing.



♂ usually 3-branched but looks 2-branched. Rachillae ≤ 1 cm, crowded with tiny flowers. Picture shows a branch with many rachillae.



♀ usually 2-branched. Usually 2 female flowers with each neuter flower.



Fruit

0.8 cm long

0.8 cm wide

Scales whitish (yellow when dry). Perianth wholly split, no tubular part.

Seed not ruminant.

Compare:

- *C. viminalis* (4): leaflets in groups of 2–4 on each side, pointing in many different directions. Often in dry, open habitats.
- *C. tenuis* (6): leaflets regular with several lines of black hairs above, sheath spines green with black tips, male rachillae longer, fruit perianth remains partly tubular.
- *C. godefroyi* (6a): Leaflets regular, grey-white beneath, petiole ≤ 2 cm, top side of rachis has small spines, sheath spines green with black tips, fruit perianth remains partly tubular.

• 5a *Calamus walkeri*

Ocrea 0.5–1.5 cm, very bristly. Leaflets with three lines of dark bristles above, and can reach 50 cm long. Dry specimens often a cold, bluish-green colour. Sheath spine bases swollen, not crescent-shaped. Male rachillae tiny. Fruit perianth with slight tubular part. In forest up to 300 m. Flowers in bud 1, 5 (Vietnam).