

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Siphonodon celastrineus Griff. (มะลูก, synonym : *S. pyriformis* Merr.) is a plant belonging to the family Celastraceae. It is an evergreen tree up to 25 m tall . Its bark is dark gray-brown , smooth or slightly scaly, whereas the inner bark is yellow. The leaves are about 8-20 × 3.5-8 cm in size , alternate with finely toothed margin , glossy dark green above, minutely hairy below. The leaf stalks are 0.8-1.3 cm long. The flowers are 0.4-0.6 cm long, yellow-orange, in short clusters of 1-3 flowers on single main stalk. The petals are 5 , with blunt , spreading tips. The stamens are 5 , fused near the base and curving inwards . The ovary is half-covered by disc , and is hollow at the top. The fruits are orange colored , globose or obovoid , hollow at the top , tough, not splitting , with many hard seeds (pyrenes).¹

In northeastern Thailand , the root of *S. celastrineus* is used as folk medicine to cure skin disease , venereal disease and bone disease but there has been no investigation of the chemical constituents of this celastraceous species.²

This investigation deals with the purification and identification of chemical compounds present in the root of this plant. The data obtained in this study should contribute to the knowledge of chemical constituents in this species and would provide valuable information in the fields of chemotaxonomy and phytochemistry.

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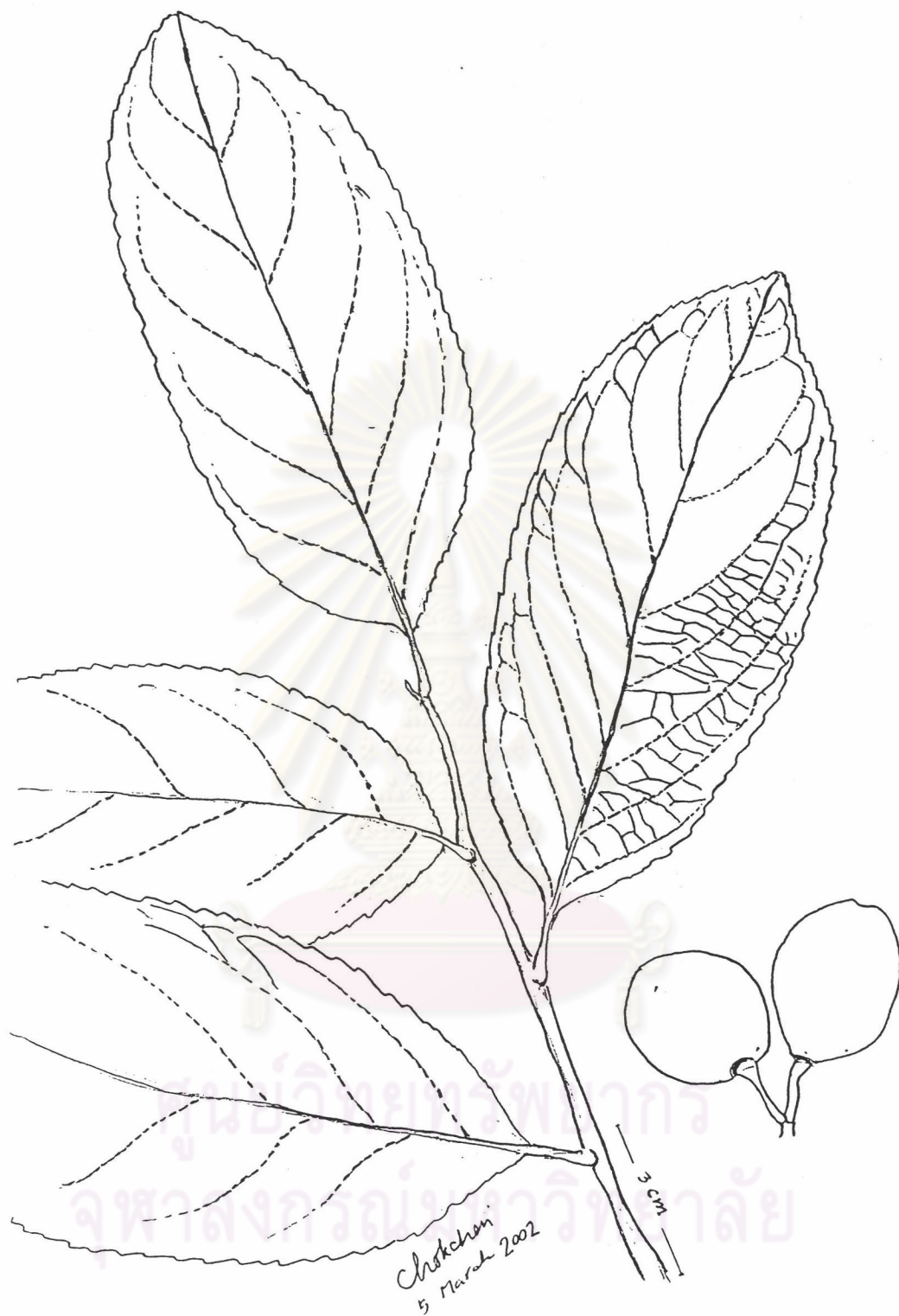


Figure 1. *Siphonodon celastrineus* Griff.