

The fish frequent the Me Kong river from its mouth up to the Talé Sap, where they pair. During the rainy season, when the fish are very fat, huge quantities are caught at Quatre Bras, Cambodia. At the end of the rains they ascend the Me Kong and in February arrive at Luang Prabang. Here and at Vienchan and Pak Lai great quantities are taken, for instance in 1890 about 6000 at Luang Prabang and 1000 at Pak Lai. At Vienchan the fish are driven into a rocky bay where they are caught with long, narrow nets of thick rope and tethered in the water until required. I once saw such a fish at Muang Chieng tethered by its gills between two wooden posts at the river bank. It was reddish white in colour, about 2.5 metres long, 1.7 metres in girth and weighed 180 kgs. The flesh is very savoury and a special "pla ra" is made of it.

The Laos people believe that only the female fish come up the river and that the males, which they say have golden scales, stay in the lake (Nong Te) where once a year the females visit them.

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ERIK SEIDENFADEN.

No. V. Abnormal Inflorescence and Flower of a Banana Tree.

Cases of abnormality in the Banana (*Musa sapientum* Linn.) have been recorded in which the inflorescence was lateral on the trunk instead of terminal, and cases in which it was much lengthened, as for example a plant in Lampang which bore a spike measuring over 13 feet with 70 clusters of fruit.

In the present case, the inflorescence instead of two transverse rows of sessile flowers in the axil of each bract bore a single row of small spikes each with single rows of flowers in the axils of their bracts, making a compound spike.

The flowers of this inflorescence were male with the exception of one or two at the base which appeared to be perfect, though no fruit was formed. One flower examined had the calyx completely divided into two parts anterior and posterior, one of which had the two main veins and five-toothed apex of a normal calyx, the other being without main veins and entire. The corolla was also double, its two segments alternating with those of the calyx. There were four stamens all fertile, one of them corresponding with the posterior stamen of the inner whorl which is usually sterile. The ovary in this and several other flowers of the same inflorescence was tricarpeillary but one-celled with parietal placentation.

It is possible that this flower resulted from the fusion of two, but in view of the lack of duplication in the sexual organs this appears to me unlikely, and I should be glad of any suggestions as to its significance.

LUANG WINIT WANADORN.

Lampang, N. Siam, Oct. 26, 1922 (Assistant Conservator of Forests).