

# *Passiflora gabrielliana*: a new species from French Guyana

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*Passiflora gabrielliana* sp. nov. was found by Cor Laurens during his visits to French Guyana in 1997, 1999 and February 2000. Several plants were found growing along roadside verges near the Rivières des Cascades at Tonnegrande, and also near Sinnamary in Circad Territory and near Roura beside the Crique Gabrielle, after which it is named.

The leaves and general habit of this vine are very similar to several other species endemic to French Guyana, mainly *P. laurifolia*, *P. variolata*, *P. citrifolia*, *P. aimae*, and *P. cerasina*. The short flowering season of less than two months may explain why this species has not been previously recorded. Large, spectacular, fragrant flowers hang in bunches from pendular branches during January and February and are followed by golden yellow fruit during February and March. The fruit are probably eaten by coati, which inadvertently distribute the seed.

Since its discovery by Cor Laurens, *P. gabrielliana* has also been recorded by Maurizio Vecchia, Pierre Pomie and Christian Houel on their recent trip to French Guyana.



Flower and fruit of *P. gabrielliana*. Photo by Maurizio Vecchia.

## *Passiflora gabrielliana* sp. nov.

Montsinery, French Guyana

Collected by Cor Laurens, 1999 and 2000

**Vine:** medium size, 8 metres and above

**Stems:** stout, terete

**Stipules:** narrow, linear

**Petiole:** robust, 12mm long, with two oval sessile glands close to leaf blades

**Leaves:** tough, leathery, 80-150mm long, 30-75mm wide, upper surface glaucous, underside dull; simple, with major vein and five to seven secondary veins

**Tendrils:** strong, 114-220mm long

**Peduncles:** strong, terete, 50mm long

**Bracts:** ovate, deep purplish; margin with few large glands

**Flowers:** pendular, borne singly but presented in clusters on fertile pendular branches; large and heavy, very showy, deep red, violet, mauve and white

**Hypanthium:** campanulate

**Sepals:** fleshy, ovate, 50mm long, 18mm wide, naviculate, deep dull red inside, paler outside; slightly keeled with short hair-like awn

**Petals:** ovate-oblong, 50mm long, 15mm wide, deep dull red both sides

**Corona Filaments:** two major ranks, the outer rank held almost horizontally beneath the petals, fleshy, up to 20mm long, banded violet-mauve and white; second rank large fleshy, pendular, up to 60mm long, 2-3mm in cross-section, banded with four or five bands of red and white towards the base, two bands of violet-mauve and white mid-way then violet-mauve for the remainder towards the apex

**Androgynophore:** stout, greenish-white

**Staminal filaments:** 8mm long, 1.5mm wide, pale green

**Pollen:** pale yellow

**Ovary:** subglobose, whitish-yellow

**Fruit:** green, ripening orange-yellow, subglobose or oviform, 50-75mm long, 35-42mm diameter; exocarp forms thin shell less than 0.25mm thick; mesocarp white, fleshy, 5-6mm thick

**Arils:** translucent, white, sweet, juicy, aromatic

**Seed:** pale or dark brown, symmetrical or very slightly asymmetrical; testa shallowly reticulate-foveate; triangular chalazal beak; 100 seeds: 0.949g (105,374 seeds per kg)

**Distribution:** coastal regions of French Guyana at low elevations, found growing along roadsides and tracks among shrubs and small trees

