

A NEW ERYTHROXYLUM SPECIES IN CUBA

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A new Erythroxyllum species was detected in the Maisi Plain, easternmost part of Cuba, living in wind-shaven littoral thicket. It was collected several times by different authors in sterile state and misidentified. An abundant fertile collection made by the first author permitted the recognition and description of a new species as E. armatum.

On the Maisi Plain, the western coast of the Windward Passage, in the easternmost point of Cuba, a particularly interesting wind-blown littoral and semilittoral thicket is developed, partly with scattered emergent tall individuals of the Coccothrinax alexandri palm. Because of the strong wind effect and salt-spray the thicket is composed partly by evergreen, leafless, and deciduous shrubs. This interesting plant community was described by several authors (MARIE-VICTORIN and LEÓN, LEÓN and SEIFRIZ) and also phytosociologically analyzed (BORHIOI *et al.* 1979, BORHIDI 1991). In the composition of the thicket several Erythroxyllum species are represented, some of them playing an important role as frequent or locally dominant species, like E. rotundifolium, E. spinescens and a further unknown species mentioned under different names by the different authors, e.g. E. brevipes by LEÓN and SEIFRIZ, E. longipes by MARIE-VICTORIN and LEÓN, and E. pedicellare by BORHIDI. The misunderstanding of this species radicated mostly on the fact, that the shrub is seasonally deciduous -- mostly in the winter period, when many botanists visited the region -- sometimes even in the rainy season as well, because of the strong wind effect. At last the first author succeeded to collect complete materials of this very interesting species, taxonomically related to E. spinescens, an other littoral spiny species of this genus. The new species differs from E. spinescens by its prostrate habit and longer tertiary branches, short, triangular, usually bilobate stipules densely grouping at the end of the branches and by having broad obovate to

suborbicular smaller leaves with dense emergent reticulum of lateral and without areole beneath. The flowers have acute calyx petals are 2 times as long as in the E. spinescens A. Rich.

The description of the new species is the following:

Erythroxyllum armatum Oviedo et Borhidi spec. nova

Frutex ramosissimus prostratus, ramis spinescentibus, rami hornotini grisacei, lenticellis brevibus vel orbicularibus dispositis, juveniles purpurascentes et longitudinaliter striati vel sulcati. Ramuli laterales cum tertiariis 0.5-1 cm longis, in foliis 2 basi densissime stipulatis terminantes. Stipulae triangulares, breves, postremo bilobatae, 1-2 mm longae. Folia late obovata vel suborbicularia, antice rotundata vel excisa o emarginata rariter apice mucronata, basi breviter attenuata, 0.5-1.5 cm longa et lata; nervo medio utrinque prominulo, ad medium laminae conspicue magis prominenti, apicem versus evanescenti, laterales utroque latere 6-8, prominulis et dense reticulatis subtus non areolatis. Petiolum tenue et brevissimum, ad 1 mm longum, lamina glabra, supra viridis, subtus flavescens, chartacea.

Flores laterales, plerumque solitarii, basi rosetta stipularum circumdati. Pedunculus angulatus, glaber, 1-3 mm longus. Calyx 5-lobatus, basi connatus, lobi oblongo-ovati, apice acuti, tubo 3-4-plo longiores. Petala 5, calyce 2-3-plo longiora, obtusa, 2 mm longa; stamina 10, filamenta basi connata, tubus filamentorum lobis calycinis brevior. Fructus oblongatus, non pleno maturus 6-7 mm longus, 1-1.5 mm latus; semen oblongo-ellipticum, 5-6.5 mm longum, 4-costatum.

Holotypus: HAC 39163; Cuba; Prov. Guantanamo, Maisi; El Canto, al este de la Cueva del Agua; en matorral xeromorfo costero y subcostero, sobre suelo caliza, diente de perro. Leg.: RAMONA OVIEDO et al. Isotypus: BP.

Obs.: Erythroxylo spinescenti A. Rich. affinis, quae a specie nostra habitu alta, ramis dense lenticellatis, lenticellis oblongis praeditis, ramulis tertiariis brevissimis, stipulis dense copertis, stipulis oblongo-ovatis, longe attenuatis, foliis obovatis 1.5-3 cm longis, basi longe attenuatis, subtus obscure areolatis, nervo medio in apice terminato, nervis lateralibus reticulo laxiore, minusque conspicuo, floribus lobis calycinis acutis, petalis 2-plo longioribus differt.

Specimina examinata: Prov. Guantanamo: El Canto, Maisi, Baracoa, Leg. R. OVIEDO, HAC 33736; -- Maisi entre Cueva del Agua y El Canto, Punta Maisi; leg.: GENES, GUTIERREZ et OVIEDO, HAJB 59211; Prov. Pinar del Rio: Cabo

Corrientes, costas de las Peñas, 20 km al NE de Jaimanitas. Leg.: ARECES, BERAZAIN et DIETRICH, HAJB 34357, 28286 HAC.

The species grows in extreme dry calcareous rocky thickets, probably endemic to Cuba.

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