

TAXONOMY

Eremospatha dransfieldii *Sunderland* sp. nov. *E. laurentii* De Wild. affinis sed foliolis in utroque latere rachidis usque ad 20 – 40, forma variabilissima obovatis-late ellipticis ad oblanceolatis-rhomboides, basi obtusatis cuneatis, ad apicem late ad perlate praemorsis (12 – 30 cm longis \times 3.5 – 5.5 cm latis) differt. Typus: Ghana, Draw River Forest Reserve, *Sunderland* 2261 (holotypus K!; isotypi KUM!, NY!).

Clustering robust climbing rattan palm to 40 m long. Stems circular in cross-section, without sheaths, 18 – 24 mm in diameter, with sheaths, 25 – 30 mm; internodes 10 – 16 cm. Leaf sheath lightly striate, indumentum absent, but sheath often profusely covered with orange-brown scale insects; ocrea entire, obliquely truncate, extending for 1 – 2 cm above the leaf junction; knee conspicuous, narrowly linear, 2 – 4 cm long, rather abrupt at base. Leaves sessile, up to 3.5 m long; rachis 1.2 – 1.5 m long, abaxially rounded, adaxially convex to concave, becoming trapezoid then triangular in cross-section distally, armed along the margins with robust, reflexed, bulbous-based, yellow-orange spines, becoming more sparsely armed distally; cirrus 1.2 – 1.5 m long, unarmed; leaflets up to 40 on each side of the rachis, inequidistant, opposite to sub-opposite, highly variable in shape, obovate-elliptic to oblanceolate to rhomboid, obtusely cuneate at base, more or less praemorse at apex, 12 – 30 \times 3.5 – 5.5 cm; lowermost leaflets smaller than the rest, linear, strap-like or broadly-lanceolate, armed along the margins with robust bulbous-based yellow to orange spines, laxly swept back across, or tightly clasping stem; acanthophylls 3 – 4 cm long. Flowers and fruits unknown.

HABITAT. *E. dransfieldii* is a light-demanding species found particularly along forest margins, in tree-fall gaps and along roadsides. The species is restricted to areas of high rainfall (>2000mm) and is locally abundant where it occurs.

DISTRIBUTION. From Sierra Leone to Ghana in moist evergreen forest.

NOTES. Notwithstanding the long history of botanical fieldwork in the Upper Guinea forests of West Africa and despite their economic importance (Falconer 1994; Oteng-Amoako & Obiri-Darko 2001), the rattan palms of the region were, until recently, particularly under-represented in herbaria. Three species of *Eremospatha* were previously recorded from the region; *E. macrocarpa*, *E. laurentii* and a third taxon, comprising a few incomplete voucher specimens which were frequently assigned to *E. hookeri*. Due to the significant morphological and ecological differences between this latter taxon and *E. hookeri*, doubts concerning the identification of “*E. hookeri*” from Upper Guinea were expressed by Sunderland (2001a). It was suggested that more complete voucher material of this taxon was required to determine its taxonomic position; these have recently been collected providing the morphological evidence that this species is indeed a distinct taxon.

ETYMOLOGY. This species is named for Dr John Dransfield, the palm specialist of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew who was instrumental in initiating the recent taxonomic and ethnobotanical studies of the rattans of Africa.

SPECIMENS CITED. SIERRA LEONE: Lake Soufon, st. 14 Feb. 1966, *Gledhill* 309 (K!, GCI!); Mofani, st. 12 Jan. 1892, *Scott-Elliot* 4442 (K!); Kambui Hills (07°05'N:11°20'W), st. 4 Nov. 1952 *Small* 832 (K!). GHANA: Draw River Forest Reserve (05°12'N:02°20'W)

st. 10 Nov. 2001, *Balinga* 71 (K!, SCA! KUM!); Subiri F.R. (05°17'N:01°43'W) st. 2 Jan. 1975, *Hall & Abbiw* 45124, (GC!); Ankasa River F.R. (05°15'N:02°36'W) st. 3 March 1971, *Moore & Enti* 9888 (GC!); Draw River Forest Reserve, (05°12'N:02°20'W), st. 26 May 1999, *Sunderland* 2261 (K!; KUM!); Bobiri F.R. (06°38'N:01°17'W), juvenile, 20 Dec. 1957 *Tomlinson* s.n. (K!).

***Laccosperma korupensis* Sunderland sp. nov.** *L. opacum* (G. Mann & H. Wendl.) Drude affinis sed vagina parce armata; foliolis lanceolatis basi cuneatis apice apiculatis ad mucronatis, cirrho aculeis recurvatis armato, acanthophyllis carentibus differt. Typus: Cameroon, Korup National Park, *Sunderland* 2303 (holotypus K!; isotypi SCA! YA! NY! WAG!).

Clustering slender palm climbing to 10 m. Stem, not circular in cross section, but somewhat oval, without sheaths up to 12 mm in diameter, with sheaths c. 15 mm; internodes 12 – 15 cm long. Leaf sheath very sparsely to moderately armed with very fine, black tipped, downward-pointing spines; sheaths near leaf junction occasionally unarmed; black caducous indumentum present on mature sheaths; ocrea 7 – 10 cm long, gradually tapering at the apex, papyraceous and tattering, pale straw-coloured without, dark shiny brown within, armed with very fine black-tipped spines. Leaves up to 1.0 m long; petiole to 12 × 0.8 cm, abaxially rounded, adaxially flattened, armed along the edges with up to 1 cm long, inequidistant, black spines with pale bulbous bases, spreading or reflexed; rachis to 50 cm long, rounded or somewhat angular in cross section, armed as the petiole, the spines decreasing in size distally; cirrus to 70 cm long armed as the rachis, although spines becoming sparse distally; leaflets 10 – 18 on each side of the rachis, inequidistant, usually sub-equidistant proximally and borne in pairs distally, lanceolate, finely acuminate at apex, bluntly cuneate at base, 12 – 20 cm long × 1.5 – 1.5 cm broad at widest point, ± concolorous, with prominent transverse veinlets and numerous, rather distant, small reflexed spines on the margins; acanthophylls absent. Flowers and fruits unknown.

HABITAT. Like *Laccosperma opacum*, *L. korupensis* is a species of the forest understorey.

DISTRIBUTION. Restricted to the coastal forests of Cameroon, *L. korupensis* is particularly abundant in the Korup National Park. Future scheduled fieldwork in Nigeria will undoubtedly confirm the presence of this species in the Cross River National Park.

NOTES. Despite the availability of vegetative material only, there is little doubt that this species is a member of the genus *Laccosperma*, with its significant morphological similarities to both *L. opacum* and *L. laeve*. However, this taxon is unique within the genus in the fact that the reduced leaflets forming grapnel hooks on the cirrus (known as acanthophylls), which are a common character in the rattan genera endemic to Africa, are absent.

ETYMOLOGY. This species is named after the Korup region, which includes the National Park. The word Korup is derived from the ethnic group, the Korop, who have inhabited the cross-border area of Cameroon and Nigeria for the past 200 years (Grimes 1996).