petiole becoming tattered and so produc-
ting the piaissa clothing the upper part of
the trunk; petiole 40–170 cm long, prox-
ima1y 1.2–2.6 x 0.8–1.5 cm, distally 0.9–1.6
x 0.8–1 cm, with red-brown patches of
tomentum but glabrescent, axially slight-
ly convex or channelled, with sharp edges;
rachis 1.4–2 m long, in mid-leaf 0.9–1 cm
wide and keeled, with red-brown patches
of tomentum but glabrescent; leaflets reg-
ular, 34–51 on each side of the rachis, in
one plane, dull dark green (red in young
leaves), the proximal 45–82 x 0.8–2.5 cm,
median 46–71 x 2.6–4.3 cm (108 x 7.3 cm
in Perrier 14499), distal 3.0 x 0.5–2.3 cm,
acute, the terminal pair in young plants
wide (up to 5 cm) and conuate for up to 25%
of their length, main veins 5–7, the
midrib prominent axially, glabrous, apices
equally attenuate. INFLORESCENCE
interfoliar; erect in bud, procerct-arched in
flower and fruit, branched to 3 orders
(once to 4 orders); peduncle 70–94 (~ 150)
mm long, proximally 1.5–2.5 x 0.9–1 cm,
distally 1.7 x 0.7–1 cm, green, glabrous;
prophyll 39–56, reddish-tomentose,
glabrescent; peduncular bract 103–188 mm,
0.8–1.3 mm; pistillode bottle-shaped, with
indentations conforming to the sta-
mens, c. 1.3 mm; persistent sepals c. 3
mm long fibres.
mesocarp fleshy, c. 5 mm thick; endocarp
turbiniform, 2.1–2.8 mm; persistent sepals
c. 3 mm long fibres.
NOTE. The fruit is said to be eaten by wild pig,
and we have seen signs which seem to confirm this.
Though Beccari (1906) thought he was making a
new combination based on Dypsis thouarsiana when coin-
ing the name Vonitra thouarsana, the descriptions,
both of the new genus and of the species, were based
on Baron 3190, quite distinct from the types of Dypsis
thouarsiana. Beccari saw the types of Dypsis thou-
arsiana and thought the leaf was a young one, possibly
a seedling, of his new taxon; he also considered the
inflorescence of Dypsis thouarsiana as too young too
analyse. The taxa, however, are clearly distinct, the
types of Dypsis thouarsiana having three most pupil-
car stamens and leaves with 3–4 leaflets on each side of
the rachis (see under 109. Dypsis thouarsiana).

**Dypsis fibrosa**


**117. Dypsis antanambensis**

This is a new species in the “Vonitra” group; it thrives on steep slopes and on ridge tops in low-canopy for-
est on ultramafic rock. It tends to branch near ground
level and have several more or less equal rather slen-
der trunks that are clothed in long persistent short
piassava fibre. The leaves are distinctive having rather short leaflets that diverge from the rachis at an
acute angle and tend to be held rather stiffly. The
name is derived from the type locality. As far as we
know, this species is not in cultivation.

**DISTRIIBUTION.** Only known from one small area in the
Mananara Avaratra Biosphere Reserve.

**HABITAT.** Rather open rain forest, on ultramafic soils
on steep mid slopes and ridge tops; 250–290 m.

**LOCAL NAMES.** Not recorded.

**USES.** Not recorded.

**CONSERVATION STATUS.** Endangered. Despite its occur-
rence in a protected area, the number of individuals
seems to be less than fifty.
Dypsis antanambensis Beentje sp. nov.
inter species inflorescentia semel ramosa D. pusillae Beentje & J. Dransf.
accedens sed statura major e, foliolis pluribus, inflorescentia longiore ab ea recedens. Type: Madagascar; Antanamb, Beentje, Dransfield & Andriampaniary 4629 (Holotypus K, isotypi BH, MO, TAN).

Palm apparently basally branched to give clumps of up to 3 otherwise unbranched aerial stems. **Stems** up to 4 m high, covered for their whole length with a dense fibrous layer c. 12 cm diam., without layer c. 5.5 cm diam., internodes 1.5–2.5 cm, bark conspicuously stepped and ringed; wood brown, quite hard. **Leaves** c. 12 in the crown, porrect, with stiff leaflets; sheath c. 48 x 3 cm, pale brown with white bloom and orange-red scales, with many marginal fibres; petiole c. 66 cm long, proximally 1.1–2 x 1.4–1.6 cm diam., distally 1–1.6 x 0.8–1.1 cm, red-brown, margins sharp, abaxially convex with patches of brown scales, adaxially channelled; rachis c. 2.5 m, in mid-leaf keeled, 0.8–1.1 x 0.6–0.9 cm; leaflets c. 49 on each side of the rachis, regular; stiff, erect, those on opposite sides of the rachis at an angle of c. 90° with each other; the proximal 36–57 x 0.4–0.7 cm, some with long pendulous reins, median 52–53 x 2.8 cm (leaflet interval 4 cm), distal 15–38 x 0.4–1.9 cm; leaflets glabrous, the apices unequally acuminate, bifid for 3–4 cm with one tip 5–7 cm longer; main veins 5–7, midrib prominent adaxially. **Inflorescence** interfoliar, spreading, branched to 1 order; in bud c. 225 cm long; peduncle c. 160 cm, distally 1.2 x 0.9 cm diam., with dense small red-brown scales; prophyll c. 131 x 2.2–3 cm, cylindrical, 2-keeled, split only at the apex; peduncular bract 102–122 cm (inserted at c. 100 cm), deciduous and carried upwards by the lengthening inflorescence, glabrous, beaked for c. 6 cm; rachis c. 41 cm, with c. 20 branches and scattered red-brown scales; rachillae 34–50 cm long, 3.5–5 x 2

*Dypsis antanambensis*. A base of petiole and sheath x 1/2; B distal part of petiole and basal leaflets x 1/2; C mid section of leaf x 1/2; D leaf tip x 1/2; E basal part of inflorescence rachis x 1/2; F detail of rachilla x 3; G seedling x 1. All from Beentje et al. 4629. Drawn by Rosemary Wise.
mm diam., somewhat pitted, bare at the base, densely covered in tiny stellate scales, with distant triads, more distally with paired flowers only; rachilla bracteoles c. 3 x 0.6 mm. **Staminate flowers** with sepals 1.4–1.6 x 1.4 mm; petals (in bud) 1.7–1.8 mm long; stamens 6, biseriate, the outer (antesepalous) series sessile, the inner series with filaments c. 0.6 mm long, anthers c. 0.6 x 0.4 mm, dorsifixed, locules parallel. **Pistillate flowers** with sepals 1.4–1.6 x 1.4 mm; petals (in bud) 1.7–1.8 mm long; gynoecium c. 0.8 x 0.5 mm; staminodes c. 0.2 mm. **Fruit** unknown, except for endocarp very fibrous, 15–25 x 12–18 mm. **Seed** with deeply ruminate endosperm, the ruminations many and up to 5 mm deep. **Eophyll** pinnate.

**Note.** Among the species of the Vonitra-group this species can be distinguished by its short, stiff leaflets, the inflorescence branched to 1 order resembling D. pusilla but is much larger, has a greater number of leaflets and a larger inflorescence.

**Specimens seen.** Mananara Avaratra: Antanambe, April 1992 (bud), Beentje et al. 4629 (Holotype K; isotypes BH, MO, P, TAN, type); idem, Oct. 1994 (sd.), Beentje & Dransfield 4809 (K, TAN).

118. **Dypsis pusilla**

This is the smallest species of the "Vonitra" group. It is an attractive palm of the undergrowth in valley bottoms. The stems are almost always unbranched, and often solitary, and densely clothed with very short piassava. It can be distinguished from other species in the group by the short usually unbranched stems, the short piassava, the delicate curving leaflets and the inflorescence that is branched to one order only. Its rather dainty appearance is reflected in the species name. As far as we know, this species is not in cultivation, but it would clearly be an attractive subject for a small garden.

**Distribution.** Masoala Peninsula and Mananara Biosphere Reserve.