

homogeneous endosperm. The combination *Neodypsis decipiens* (Becc.) Jumelle & Perrier existed only in Beccari's imagination; Jumelle & Perrier (1913) mentioned the possibility but specifically refrained from making it.

HB has seen bees visiting the flowers of a cultivated specimen in Antananarivo.

SPECIMENS SEEN. Ankazobe: Manankazo, sine die (bud), *Perrier* 12099 (P). Manjakandriana: (probably all from Andrangolaoka), *Baron* 502 (K, P; syntype), *Baron* 3271 (K, syntype); & *Baron* s.n. (K); Ambatoloana to Mandraka, ?1936 (fr.), *Boiteau* s.n. (P). Ambositra: 24km S of Ambositra, April 1992 (seed), *Beentje et al.* 4658 (BH, K, MO, P, TAN). Ambohimahasoa: Ankafina forest, March 1881 (fl.), *Hildebrandt* 3974a (K, syntype).

CULTIVATED. Antananarivo Botanic Garden, Jan. 1938 (fl.), *Herb. Jard. Bot. Tan.* 3091 (K, P); idem, Oct. 1940 (fl.), *Decary* 15889 (P); idem, April 1971 (y.fr.), *Moore* 9923 (P).

SIGHT RECORDS. Manerinerina (*Dransfield & Beentje*). Manjakandriana: Ikopa R. sources (*Perrier*). Antsirabe: Vavato (*Perrier*). Ambositra: Ranomena (*Beentje*); Ilaka (*Dransfield & Beentje*). Ambohimahasoa: NW of Ranomafana (*Beentje*).



Dypsis decipiens, view of crown in flower, Itremo Massif (Photo: D. Du Puy).

25. DYP SIS BASILONGA

A rare and elegant palm, apparently confined to a single hill which is now surrounded by a sea of cultivation and secondary vegetation. We have seen this species *in situ* in the type locality, but the inflorescences were too rotten to make a proper specimen. It is a compact, rather graceful palm, common in the low-canopy thin-stemmed small-crown forest just below the summit of Mt Vatovavy at 450–500 m altitude, growing on the edges of cliffs in what is probably a wind-swept habitat. The species name refers to the 'basal' leaflets nearest the petiole, which are sometimes very long.

DISTRIBUTION. Only known from Vatovavy.

HABITAT. Small-crown, submontane forest, on gneiss; 300–500 m.

LOCAL NAMES. *Madiovozona* (Tanala; meaning 'clean neck').

USES. Excellent palm-heart.

CONSERVATION STATUS. Endangered. Single-site status; the only protection of the forest derives from local fady (taboos).

Dypsis basilonga (*Jum. & H. Perrier*) *Beentje & J. Dransf.* **comb. nov.**

SYNONYMS:

Neodypsis basilongus Jum. & H. Perrier, *Ann. Inst. Bot.-Géol. Colon. Marseille sér. 2, 3, 1* (1): 16, pl. 4 (1913); Jum., *Ann. Inst. Bot.-Géol. Colon. Marseille sér. 4, 2* (2): 11 (1924); Jum., *Cat. Pl.*



Dypsis basilonga

Madagascar, Palmae: 17 (1938); Jum. & H. Perrier, Fl. Madagascar 30: 144, fig. 39 (1945). Type not indicated (protologue) but from Jumelle (1924): Madagascar, Mt. Vatovavy, *Perrier* 12088 (Holotype P).

Solitary palm. **STEM** 2–5 m tall, 10–15 cm diam.; internodes short; crownshaft well-developed, whitish, c. 40 cm long. **LEAVES** strongly curved, c. 6–7 in the crown, 1–1.5 m long; sheath white and waxy, c. 40 cm long, glabrous, without ligules; petiole 14–16 cm long, c. 1.5 cm wide, channelled, with patches of dense tomentum; rachis c. 1 m long; leaflets more than 30 on each side of the rachis, in groups of 2–3, the proximal leaflets with a very long gap between the basal pair and the next pair, the most proximal to 117 × 3 cm, the next 75 × 1.9 cm, median 64–68 × 2.6–3.1 cm, the group interval 4.5–5.5 cm, the leaflet interval 0.2–0.3 cm, distal 16–40 × 1–1.7 cm, glaucous abaxially, with lines of minute reddish scales on the minor veins, main vein 1, with thickened margins, apices unequally attenuate. **INFLORESCENCE** interfoliar, c. 80 cm long, branched to

2 orders; peduncle 40–60 cm long, proximally 5 × 0.5 cm, straight within the sheath, then curved through 180° so the branched part hanging; prophyll borne at c. 40 cm above the base of the peduncle, waxy; peduncular bract inserted at c. 50 cm from the base of the peduncle; first order branches with a secondary rachis of up to 11 cm, proximally 2 × 0.8 cm, with up to 8 rachillae, glabrous; rachillae 15–19 cm long, c. 4 mm diam., with distant triads in pits; rachilla bracts proud and rounded. **STAMINATE FLOWERS** not seen. **PISTILLATE FLOWERS** not seen; sepals in fruit rounded; petals twice as long as the sepals (fide Beccari). **FRUIT** (see note) ellipsoid, c. 20 × 9–10 mm, with rounded base and apex; endocarp fibrous, with anastomosing fibres. **SEED** oblong, with pointed base and rounded apex; endosperm ruminant with shallow distant intrusions.

NOTE. The confusion with *D. decipiens* was caused by Beccari, who thought the two species were the same



Dypsis basilonga. **A** leaf base × 1/5; **B** mid section of leaf × 1/2; **C** leaf tip × 1/5; **D** first order inflorescence branch × 1/2. All from *Perrier* 12088. Drawn by Margaret Tebbs.

and united them in *Macrophloga*; the new genus was necessary because of the ruminant endosperm of the fruit of *Perrier* 12088. The leaves in the genus description were based on *D. decipiens*.

The fruit is now missing from the type; there is, however, a photo which shows the fruit attached to a loose rachilla. The description of the fruit and seed is taken from Beccari (1914), who is accurate in his descriptions.

The protologue adds the following data, not apparent from the type or its label: Solitary, stem 4–6 m, diam. 12 cm; leaves gracefully curved; sheath whitish waxy, adaxially pinkish, 3 cm wide; inflorescence interfoliar, branched to 2 orders; Staminate flowers in bud 4 mm long. Pistillate flowers with sepals 1.5 × 1.5 mm, petals 3 × 2.5 mm; ovary cylindrical.

SPECIMENS SEEN. Mananjary: Mt Vatovavy, Oct. 1911 (fr.), *Perrier* 12088 (P, type).

26. DYPsis AMBOSITRAE

A graceful palm of the high plateaux, which would probably do quite well in cultivation. We have looked for seeds but not found any, so far. This species will probably become extinct in the near future, unless some rapid action is taken to safeguard the remaining trees, now numbering less than ten. The name comes from the town which lies between the known populations.

DISTRIBUTION. Central Madagascar, near Ambositra.

HABITAT. Forest; among rocks or in riverine forest remnants, medium or steep mid slope; alt. 1300–1500 m.

LOCAL NAMES. Not recorded.

USES. Not recorded.

CONSERVATION STATUS. Critical. In 1992 twelve trees of this species were known, all growing in or next to agricultural areas; in 1994, at least five of these had been cut down or burnt.

***Dypsis ambositrae* Beentje sp. nov.**

D. oreophila et *D. tsaratananensis* caulibus caespitosis foliolis aggregatis staminibus 6 affinis sed inflorescentia glabra vagina folii magna ceracea, foliis spiraliter dispositis foliolis magnis differt. Typus: Madagascar, Ilaka Afovoany, *Beentje & Andriampaniry* 4742 (Holotypus K; isotypi BH, MO, P, TAN).

Clustering palm in tufts of 2–3, sometimes (*Beentje & Andriampaniry* 4615) appearing solitary when in regularly burnt terrain. **STEM** 3–7 m tall, c. 12 cm diam.; internodes 10–20 cm, pale brown to grey (green and ringed when young), nodal scars 0.5 cm, grey; wood hard; base of stem slightly wider, with some surface roots; slight bulge in upper trunk in one older tree; crownshaft pale waxy grey-green. **LEAVES** 7–11, spiral, gracefully arching, with stiff leaflets; sheath 64–103 cm, pale green with a white bloom, ligules 2 cm; petiole 9–30 cm long, 3–6 × 2.2–4.5 cm diam., channelled with soft edges; rachis 2.1–2.8 m, in mid-leaf 2.2–3.5 cm wide, green; leaflets 74–84 on each side of the rachis, grouped only very slightly in 2s–5s, in one plane, the leaflets on opposite sides of the rachis at an angle of 90°, stiff with only the apices pendulous, apices attenuate, unequally bifid, the proximal 69–144 × 0.3–1.8 cm, (first



**Dypsis
ambositrae**



Dypsis ambositrae. View of crown of mature tree, near Ambositra (*Beentje & Andriampaniry* 4615).