

**140. DYP SIS RAMENTACEA**

This pretty little palm is known from a single collection from forest undergrowth in the lowlands near to Mananara Avaratra. The species name refers to the scales (ramenta) on the undersurface of the leaves.

**DISTRIBUTION.** Mananara, Antanambe.

**HABITAT.** Lowland rain forest; 115 m.

**LOCAL NAMES.** Not recorded.

**USES.** Not recorded.

**CONSERVATION STATUS.** Critical; found in a tiny patch of forest near agricultural land; individuals seen less than twenty-five.

***Dypsis ramentacea* J. Dransf. sp. nov.**

habitu inflorescentiaque *D. louvelii* superficialiter similis sed petiolo longiori, pagina inferiori laminae ramentas ferenti rachillis inflorescentiae papillois differt (floribus ignotis). Typus: Madagascar, Mananara, Antanambe, *Beentje* 4458 (Holotypus K; isotypi BH, MO, P, TAN).

Slender solitary forest undergrowth palmet to 70 cm tall. **STEMS** c. 4–5 mm diam., when dry, when fresh to 8 mm diam., internodes 4–12 mm long, sparsely and minutely scaly. **LEAVES** 9–10 in crown, apparently marcescent, crownshaft poorly defined; sheath 5–6 cm long, 1 cm diam., rather densely covered in caducous dark red-brown indumentum; auricles triangular, to 5 × 3 mm, membranous, soon tattering; petiole 9–15 cm long, c. 2 mm wide, ± triangular in section, bearing scattered dark brown scales; lamina entire 25–31 cm long, deeply bifid, the rachis 8–9.5 cm, the two lobes to 18–22 × 3.5 cm, diverging at an acute angle, the lobes shallowly toothed, adaxial lamina surface with



***Dypsis acaulis*.** Whole plant × 1/3. From *Perrier* 12044. Drawn by Margaret Tebbs.



**Dypsis  
ramentacea**



**Dypsis ramentacea**, growing south of Mananara Avaratra (Beentje 4458).

sparse, minute brown punctiform scales, abaxial surface with conspicuous, abundant dark brown ramenta on all major veins and scattered red-brown punctiform scales. **INFLORESCENCES** 25–30 cm long, arching or semi-horizontal, branching to 1 order; peduncle to 21 cm, 1 mm diam., covered in discrete elevated dark brown scales; prophyll to 15 × 0.4 cm, membranous, straw-coloured, with sparse dark scales; peduncular bract exceeding the prophyll by 7 cm, similar to prophyll; rachis 5–6 cm; rachillae 8–10 in number, 2–3.5 cm long, c. 0.6 mm diam., with dark brown papillae, triads 1–3 mm distant. **FLOWERS** said to be red in bud, opening white, not available. Mature **FRUIT** bright red, ovoid, 13 × 8 mm; seed 1–2 × 6 mm; endosperm homogeneous, embryo lateral near the base.

**NOTE.** Although no flowers have been available for study, the habit and inflorescence structure suggests that this is probably a species of *Dypsis* with three stamens and is certainly undescribed. Because it is so distinctive, we have named it *D. ramentacea*, even though staminate flowers that would suggest relationships are missing. The inflorescence is reminiscent of that of *D. louvelii* but the rachillae are distinctive in the presence of dark papillae. The undersurface of the leaf bears abundant ramenta, whence the specific epithet. Such ramenta are also present in *D. mocquersiana* but this species has a very different erect inflorescence with many rachillae, and the leaves are usually epetiolate. There is also a superficial similarity with *D. glabrescens* but in the latter ramenta are absent, there is no petiole and the rachillae are shorter.

**SPECIMENS SEEN.** Mananara Avaratra: Antanambe, 1.5 hours walk upstream from first ferry north of Antanambe, Oct. 1991 (fr.), Beentje 4458 (Holotype K; isotypes BH, MO, P, TAN).

## DOUBTFUL NAMES

***Areca madagascariensis* Mart. nomen dubium.**

Hist. Nat. Palm. 3: 179, t. 158: V, 1–5 (1837). Syntypes: Madagascar, Arbre a sel, Areque singe, *Poivre* s.n., *Michaux* s.n., both types not found at P or elsewhere.

**NOTE:** The epithet clashes with, and predates, *Chrysalidocarpus madagascariensis*, but *Areca madagascariensis* must be a **nomen dubium**.

***Phloga microphoenix* Baill. nomen dubium.**

Bull. Soc. Linn. Paris 150: 1185 (1895). Syntypes: Madagascar, Île Sainte Marie, Tafondrou forest, *Boivin* 1703 (not seen), 1704 (P).

**NOTE.** We are very doubtful about this name. *Boivin* 1704 is *Dypsis forficifolia* Mart.; however, Baillon describes the leaflets as many, regular, linear-lanceolate, 40 × 2 cm; this sounds most unlike *Phloga nodifera*, or *Dypsis forficifolia* for that matter. Beccari (1906, 1914) says the type consists of a young *Phloga nodifera* inflorescence and the leaves of another palm, probably *Dypsis boiviniana*. He cites *Boivin* 1704 under *Dypsis forficifolia*, so presumably saw nr. 1703.

***Dypsis vilersiana* Baill. nomen dubium.**

Bull. Soc. Linn. Paris 147: 1165 (1894). Type: Central Madagascar, *Le Myre de Vilers* s.n. (P, type; not seen, said to be an inflorescence only, described as having 3 stamens).

**NOTE.** Beccari 1906 says this is a young inflorescence of *Phloga polystachya*.