

† *Bactris jamaicana*, spec. nov. PRICKLY-POLE. Figs. 101, 102, 105.

Palma maxima sobolifera, ad 8 m. alta; truncus durissimus ad 1.5 dm. in diam., cæsiio-albus et exfoliatus in superficie cum maturus; spinæ nigræ debilesque 3-6 cm. longæ; folia 12 vel plura in arboribus maturis ad 3 m. longa; petiolus compressus, spinis nigris in inferiore latere quarum breviores 1-2 cm. longæ, longiores, 4-6 cm. longæ; pinnæ 120 vel plures, non aggregatæ, ad 70 cm. longæ, 4 cm. latæ, fere espinosæ; spatha 30 cm. vel plus longa; spadix longior quam spatha, circa 50 ramis; fructus lucide coccineo-aureus, valde oblongus, 15 vel 16 mm. latus, 10 vel 11 mm. longus, glaber, multo minor quam in *B. Plumeriana*, major quam in *B. cubensis*.

Large coarse bactrid, maturing with several or many trunks in a close clump, to 8 m. tall and the hard-shelled trunks to 1 or 1.5 dm. diameter, often buttressed by a great base of matted and superficial roots: trunk developing a gray-white flaky bark, the rather sparse slender needle-like black weak spines 3-6 cm. or more long and both ascending and reflexed, ringed on upper part of trunk: leaves on mature trees clustered at top, dull in color, perhaps a dozen in number, to 3 m. long, blade not flat because of the ascending pinnæ, flattened petiole beset on its nether low-ridged face with thin black spines 1 or 2 cm. long interspersed by others 4-6 cm. long, rachis short-prickly on back but bare on the upper grooved face unless on the edges; pinnæ 60 or more pairs on full-sized leaves although not opposite on the rachis nor clustered, often devoid of prickles, central ones to 70 cm. long and about 4 cm. broad at middle, long-attenuate to a narrow base, long-pointed and with a very unequally divided apex, glabrous, bearing usually 3 strong nerves either side the prominent midrib and lesser nerves between: spadix infrafoliar from a basal flattish soft-spiny sheath about 15 cm. long and an elongated main stiffly and divaricately spiny pointed spathe 30 cm. and more long that commonly exceeds the inflorescence which bears perhaps 50 short

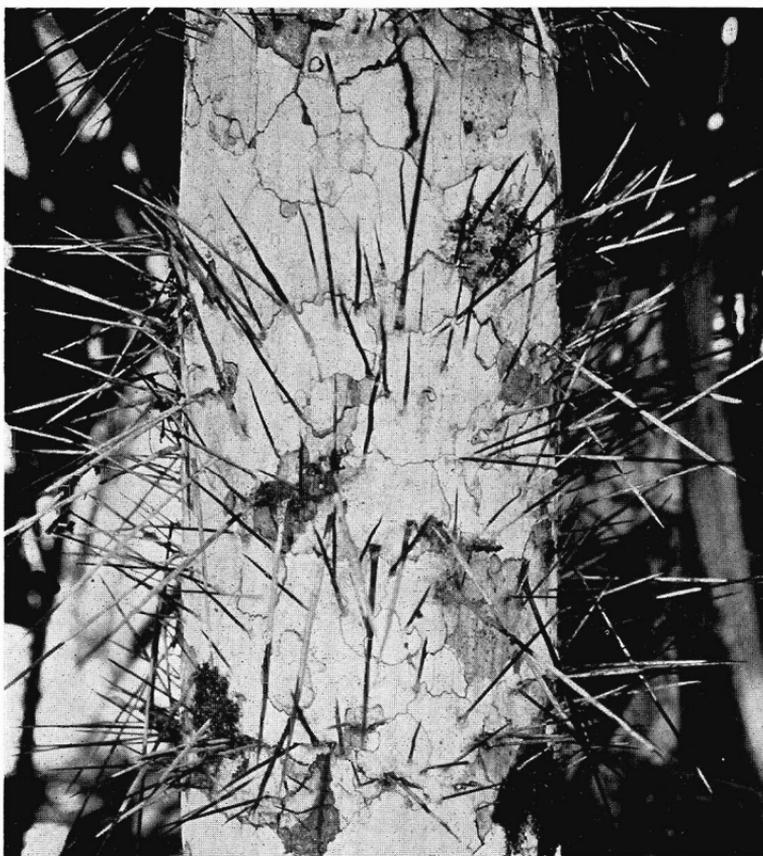


104. TRUNK ARMATURE of *Bactris cubensis*. About one-third natural size.

glabrous branches: fruit bright scarlet-orange at fresh maturity and showy, in a close cluster that may be 15 cm. long, circular in outline but so strongly compressed endwise as to be almost flat top and bottom, to 15 or 16 mm. broad, 10 or 11 mm. high not counting the very short point on top, glabrous, finely longitudinally veined when dry, the flesh or pulp thin and said to be eaten by birds but drying down to a thin skin; seed single, shape and size of the dry fruit, black, curved and not apiculate at top, the 3 pores on the sides large and prominent, albumen white and hard and not ruminant but marked by embryonic cavities.

Widely distributed in Jamaica, although not now common. Type locality, Gibraltar in St. Catherine, on Gibraltar Road in pasture of Frank Roper estate, *Bailey 216, 714*; a clump of many trunks, about 25 feet high and largest boles 5 inches in diameter; children said to eat the meat in the little nut; birds eat the thin external pulp.

I have seen leaf specimens of the native *Bactris* from Jamaica with more spiny leaves than those I have described; they were probably taken



105. ARMATURE of *Bactris jamaicana*, against the gray-white trunk. About one-half natural size.

from young leaves or leaves on immature trees, whereas my diagnosis is drawn from full-grown leaves on bearing trees. The common practice of making specimens from young or immature leaves, because they are easier to collect and to handle, is one reason for the confusion in palm identification.

The Hispaniolan species, *Bactris Plumeriana*, distinguishes itself from the Jamaican plant by its more profuse armature (Fig. 103), leaf-blade apparently flatter in expansion of pinnæ and color lighter, pinnæ smaller, relatively broader at base, sometimes sparsely spiniferous, much less prominently nerved or ribbed and apex more evenly bifid, spathe mostly shorter, fruit twice the bulk and not depressed. The Cuban species, *B. cubensis*, is more strongly armed than either of the others (Fig. 104), pinnæ



106. COYURE PALM IN PUERTO RICO. *Aiphanes acanthophylla*.

glossy and shorter than those of the Jamaican and less strongly ribbed and probably more constantly spiniferous on margins, spathe very stoutly armed, spadix mostly with 25 or fewer branches, fruit conspicuously smaller.

We are now ready to consider the baetrid of Puerto Rico. This plant was first given an accredited binomial by Martius in 1847, *Bactris acanthophylla*. It was described by O. F. Cook in 1901 as a new genus, *Curima*

*calophylla*. Beccari in 1920 made it *Martinezia acanthophylla*. Burret in 1932 revived the Willdenovian genus *Ai-phanes* (having taken it out of *Martinezia* to which authors had referred it) and made the Puerto Rican palm *A. acanthophylla*. He referred to it the *Bactris erosa* of Martius, although under the Rules this name should supplant *acanthophylla* if the two are identifiable and are the same species because of prior page of publication. In fact, however, *B. erosa* is unidentifiable from the leaf diagnosis in Martius and he gives no locality or nativity although the species is based on the work of Plumier. Like Martius' *B. chætophylla* and *B. Pavoniana*, both ascribed to definite islands, his *B. erosa* may well be left out of synonymy as *nomina incerta*. Subsequent exploration has not discovered them. With leaf forms so diverse between foliage on young and mature plants it would not be strange if these specific names belong to recognized species of *Bactris* or *Acrocomia*, or possibly to planted palms.



107. TRUNK OF COYURE. *Aiphanes acanthophylla*.