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## *Aiphanes acaulis*, a New Species from Colombia

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Recent explorations for palms in north-western Colombia have revealed several novelties, one of which, an interesting stemless species of *Aiphanes*, is described here as new to science.

***Aiphanes acaulis*** Galeano & Bernal sp. nov. (Fig. 1)

Palma solitaria acaulis. Pinnae utrinque 18-30 regulariter in eadem planitie insertae, lineares vel angustissime cuneatae. Spadix simplex. Antherae subquadratae. Pistillodium inerme.

Solitary, acaulescent. Leaves 8-10: sheath 11-16 cm long, 1 cm wide, fibrous, densely covered abaxially with irregular, dark brown scales and with purplish-brown, less than 0.5 mm long bristles, usually with a few black, flat spines; petiole 12.5-50 cm long, with an indumentum of scales and bristles like that of the sheath, rarely armed with spines; rachis 42-75 cm long, adaxially ridged, densely covered with purplish-black, to 5 mm long bristles, and occasionally with scattered, slender, bicolor, to 2 cm long bristles, abaxially with scaly indumentum like that of the sheath and with inconspicuous, brown, flat, very short (ca. 0.2 mm) bristles; pinnae 18-30 on each side, regularly inserted, horizontally arranged in one plane, linear or very narrowly cuneate, 1-nerved, plicate along secondary veins, truncate and prae-

morsely toothed at apex, the upper margin produced into a cauda to 4 cm long, the apical pinnae narrowly cuneate, obliquely truncate at apex, 1-3 nerved, all pinnae glabrous above, the midnerve armed with 1-3 slender, bicolor, to 2 cm long bristles, glabrous below or with very short, purplish-black bristles scattered on surface and veins; basal pinnae 7-24.5 cm long along the upper margin, 0.7-2.1 cm wide, central pinnae 10.8-27 cm long, 1.7-2.5 cm wide, apical pinnae 6.5-15.5 cm long, to 5.6 cm wide at apex. Inflorescence spicate: prophyll 16-26 cm long, 7-11 mm wide, linear, unarmed adaxially, densely covered abaxially with irregular brown scales and with very short, appressed, purplish-brown bristles; peduncular bract 37.5-94 cm long, unarmed, with scattered, appressed, short, brown hairs; peduncle 12-88 cm long, with scattered, very short, purplish-brown bristles; spike 15-31 cm long, densely covered with very short brown bristles; flowers purple, sunken, the pistillate ones distributed along the proximal half or so, each with two staminate flowers above, the distal half with male flowers only. Staminate flowers 1.5-2.5 mm diam., broader than high: sepals imbricate, cucullate, membranaceous, glabrous; petals glabrous, connate for half their length, the lobes ovate; anthers nearly square, pistillode minute, 3-gibbous. Pistillate flowers slightly larger: sepals broadly imbricate, glabrous; petals valvate, glabrous; gynoeceium ovoid, minutely verruculose, without bristles or spines; staminodial tube toothed. Fruit unknown.

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*Specimens examined:* COLOMBIA, DEPARTAMENTO DEL CHOCO: Municipio de El Carmen, vereda El Doce (carretera Medellín-Quibdó, km 151), río Atrato, margen izquierda, 700 m alt., enero 5, 1980, *Bernal & Galeano 71* (COL, holotype; HUA, K, isotypes), 72 (COL, HUA); Municipio de Quibdó, Corregimiento de San Francisco de Ichó, río Ichó, margen derecha, 150 m alt., julio 11, 1981, *Galeano & Bernal 454* (COL, HUA, K).

*Aiphanes acaulis* is a very characteristic species; it is readily distinguished from the remaining species by the acaulescent habit, the linear or very narrowly cuneate pinnae and the unbranched inflorescence. In the habit and shape of pinnae it recalls *Aiphanes tessmannii* Burret (1932), from Peru, but the latter has an inflorescence with many branches.

This species appears to be very uncommon, and only two small populations have been located in the cited regions, although several areas of northwestern Colombia have been explored in search of palms.

Although some variation exists between both known populations, particularly in size of leaves and inflorescence, there is no doubt that they are conspecific.

Besides *A. acaulis*, only two species have a spicate inflorescence; both of them are known only from Colombia. *Aiphanes*

*simplex* Burret has clustered stems 2–4 m high, and its leaves bear 11–16 cuneate pinnae on each side; the other species, *A. macroloba* Burret, has leaves simple or with 3–4 pinnae on each side, and the blade is beset above with very characteristic long, soft bristles, scattered along the veins.

Two further species, described with an unbranched inflorescence, deserve a more detailed discussion and will be the subject of another paper. These are *A. chocoensis* A. Gentry and *A. monostachys* Burret. The former has proved to be a synonym of *A. macroloba*: comparison of the holotype of *A. chocoensis* with topotypes of *A. macroloba* leaves no doubt as to the identity of both species. *A. monostachys*, on the other hand, was based on a mixed collection, which included the inflorescence of *A. macroloba*, as we will prove elsewhere. Both species were described from the same locality and both have been rediscovered there. The true *A. monostachys* has an inflorescence with 15–28 rachillae. An emended description of *A. monostachys* will be provided in the forthcoming paper.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- BURRET, M. 1932. Die Palmengattungen *Martinezia* und *Aiphanes*. Notizbl. Bot. Gart. Berlin 11: 557–577.