

133. DYP SIS COOKEI

This is a beautiful little palm, distinctive in its rather thick metallic blue green leaves with narrow leaflets. Leaf texture and colour are somewhat reminiscent of that of the Mexican palm, *Chamaedorea metallica*. Clearly this would make a very handsome ornamental but, sadly, it is known from only one locality (Marojejy) and has been collected once only. It is named for David Cooke, who is in charge of the Palm House at Kew, and has joined two Kew expeditions to Madagascar, helping greatly in the collection of palms and contributing his very special brand of humour and companionship.

DISTRIBUTION. Marojejy.

HABITAT. Humid lower montane forest on steep slope; 1100 m.

LOCAL NAMES. Not recorded.

USES. Not recorded.

CONSERVATION STATUS. Endangered. Although this species occurs within the Marojejy Nature Reserve, it is known from but a single population consisting of less than twenty plants.

***Dypsis cookei* J. Dransf. sp. nov.**

inter species floribus staminatis triandris staminibus antepetalis, staminodiis antesepalis alternantibus, foliolis unicastis coriaceis metallico-atroviridibus inflorescentia 2-3-ramosa rachillis dense pruinosis distincta. Typus: Madagascar, Reserve Naturelle Marojejy, along trail to summit of Marojejy Est, north of Mandena, *Dransfield et al.* JD6761 (Holotypus K; isotypi MO, P, TAN).

Slender clustering palmlet to 2 m tall, often less. **STEMS** green, c. 6 mm diam.; internodes 15-17 mm long, glabrous, shining dark green



**Dypsis
cookei**

when fresh, becoming striate on drying. **LEAVES** 6-7 in the crown; leaf-sheaths pale green, tinged purple when young, smooth when fresh, becoming striate on drying, bearing caducous, minute scattered punctiform scales, otherwise glabrous, c. 7 cm long, two minute auricles present at the base of the petiole (?always); leaf without sheath 25-35 cm long; petiole 12-20 mm long, c. 1.5 mm wide, subtriangular in section, bearing scattered brown scales; rachis 15-20 cm, bearing scattered scales as on the petiole; leaflets 6-8 on each side of the rachis, very narrow, dark blue-green with an almost metallic sheen, mostly composed of one fold but occasion-



Dypsis cookei. A beautiful palm of the undergrowth of mountain forest, Marojejy.

ally apical pair and the basal leaflets composed of two folds, proximal leaflets 12–16 × 0.6–1.1 cm, median leaflets 17–20 × 0.7–0.8 cm, distal leaflets 12–14 × 1.2–1.4 cm; lamina surfaces glabrous apart from very sparse scattered minute punctiform brown scales. **INFLORESCENCE** interfoliar, c. 38 cm long, only slightly protruding beyond the leaves, crimson-purple throughout, branching to 2–3 orders with c. 28 rachillae, the whole branched part of the inflorescence more or less triangular in outline when pressed; peduncle glabrous, c. 15–20 cm long; prophyll c. 12 cm long, peduncular bract exceeding the prophyll by about 8 cm, the tip reaching to the level of the basalmost rachilla, the two bracts drying brown and bearing scattered dark brown scales, especially along the margins; rachis c. 10.5 cm; rachillae c. 25, 2–4 cm long, the longest near the base, c. 1 mm diam. when fresh, bearing triads 1–2 mm apart, the rachilla surface densely pruinose. **STAMINATE FLOWER** bud c. 0.7 mm diam.; sepals 3 rounded, gibbous, c. 0.5 mm diam., abaxially minutely and densely papillose; petals broadly triangular, c. 0.5 mm long,

c. 0.5 mm wide, obscurely striate; stamens 3, antepetalous, anthers didymous, c. 0.25 mm long, the filaments triangular c. 0.2 mm long; pistillode pyramidal, c. 3 mm high. **PISTILLATE BUDS** very immature, c. 0.5 mm diam., rounded. Other parts not seen.

NOTE. This species is easily distinguished by its dark metallic green uncostate leaflets of a rather thick, coriaceous texture. The whole plant has a rheomorphic appearance but in fact grows far from water, on a steep slope in montane rain forest.

SPECIMEN SEEN. Andapa: Reserve Naturelle Marojejy, along trail to summit of Marojejy Est, north of Mandena, above Camp 2, Nov. 1989 (buds), *Dransfield et al.* JD6761 (Holotype K, isotypes MO, P, TAN).



Dypsis cookei. **A** crown × 1/2; **B** detail of rachilla × 2; **C** opened staminate flower × 20. All from *Dransfield et al.* JD6761. Drawn by Rosemary Wise.