

16. DYP SIS LEPTOCHEILOS

A species described from a cultivated tree in Tahiti; it resembles *D. lastelliana*, but the situation about its origin is confused. In cultivation this beautiful palm is much more tolerant of cooler and drier conditions than is *D. lastelliana*, making it more suitable for cultivation in southern California. The name is derived from the Greek words for slender lip.

DISTRIBUTION. Said to occur in W Madagascar, but no voucher specimens from the wild are known.

HABITAT. Said to be at low elevations along and in rocky, sandy, seasonally dry streambeds (no vouchers).

LOCAL NAMES. Not recorded.

USES. Not recorded.

CONSERVATION STATUS. Unknown, until the status in the wild has become more clear.

Dypsis leptocheilos (Hodel) Beentje & J. Dransf. **comb. nov.**

SYNONYM:

Neodypsis leptocheilos Hodel, The Palm Journal Jan. 1993: 9 (1993). Type: cultivated material originating from Madagascar and grown in Tahiti, Papeari, Hodel 1144 (Holotype BH; isotype K).

Solitary palm. **TRUNK** to 10 m, 25 cm diam., slightly flared at the base; internodes 12 cm, nodal scars 2 cm, white. **LEAVES** c. 15 in the crown, porrect; sheath partially open in outer leaves, c. 62 cm long, 5 mm thick, covered in dense rusty brown tomentum, with auricles 3.5 cm high; petiole 17 cm long, 7–9 cm wide, channelled adaxially, densely tomentose but glabrescent; rachis to 4 m long, proximally channelled and tomentose, more distally becoming flattened and eventually keeled distally, glabrous distally; leaflets up to 103 on each side of the rachis, regular, slightly drooping, green, linear, straight, acuminate, the proximal 55 × 0.5–0.8 cm, median 85 × 4 cm, distal 55 × 0.5–0.8 cm, glabrous but for some ramenta on the proximal part of the midrib abaxially, main veins 3. **INFLORESCENCE** interfoliar becoming infrafoliar in fruit, branched to 3 orders, to 1.7 × 1.4 m; peduncle to 65 cm long, 11 cm diam. proximally, 3–6 cm diam. distally, flattened, reddish tomentose over green; prophyll ± woody, c. 43 cm, borne at 12 cm above the base of the peduncle, c. 12 cm wide, tomentose; peduncular bract deciduous, woody, inserted at 26 cm from the base of the peduncle, to 70 × 10–15 cm, reddish tomentose; two smaller peduncular bracts present near the apex of the peduncle, to 17 cm long, tomentose; rachis 100 cm, flattened, grey-tomentellous, with 24 first order branches; rachis bracts to 3 cm long; rachillae spreading, to 30 cm long, 3 mm diam., green; with distant triads in pits; rachilla bract 0.5–0.75 mm high. **STAMINATE FLOWERS** with sepals 2–2.5 mm, keeled, truncate; petals on a 1 mm high receptacle, 2 × 1.5–1.75 mm, ovate, acute; stamens said to be connate for 1.75 mm, filaments 0.8–1 mm long, anthers 1 mm long, dorsifixed?; pistillode 1.75–2 mm, columnar. **PISTILLATE FLOWERS** with sepals 2 mm; petals 3 × 3 mm; gynoeceum 4 mm high, 2–2.5 mm diam., with 1 mm long stigma lobes. **FRUIT** globose, dark brown, 10–12 mm; endocarp fibrous, the fibres anastomosing rather intensely. **SEED** 8.5–10 × 8.5–9 mm, globose, pointed at the base, rounded at the apex, with a sub-basal depression corresponding to the embryo; ruminations of the endosperm irregular, to 3.5 mm deep and up to half the diameter of the seed wide. **EOPHYLL** pinnate.

NOTE. Close to *D. lastelliana* but differs in rachilla bract (thinner in *leptocheilos*), and fruit/seed size. Differences enumerated in the protologue with another species of *Neodypsis* (it is unclear which one) in the same garden in Tahiti, or with the description of *N.*



Dypsis leptocheilos
(o: Perrier 15802)



Dypsis leptocheilos, view of type plant in cultivation in Tahiti (Photo: D. Hodel).

lastelliana in the Flore de Madagascar (notoriously unreliable) are not pertinent.

A problem is *Perrier* 15802 (P), from Ambilobe: upper Mananjeba R., c. 400 m alt., Aug. 1903 (fl.) with very red-cottony leaf sheaths, which is quite like *leptocheilos*, it has rachillae almost without any lip on the rachilla bract, and so is unlike either *leptocheilos* or *lastelliana*.

SPECIMENS SEEN. Cultivated material originating from Madagascar and grown in Tahiti, Papeari, April 1992 (fr., seedling), *D.R. & M. Hodel* 1144 (type, K). And probably: without locality, anno 1986 (seed), *Razafindratsira* s.n. (K).

17. DYPsis LIGULATA

INSUFFICIENTLY KNOWN SPECIES

The name refers to the 'ligule' or auricle on the leaf sheath, a character much used by Jumelle, but of doubtful value in separating species.

DISTRIBUTION. NW Madagascar.

HABITAT. Moist forest on sandstone, at low elevation.

LOCAL NAMES. Not recorded.

USES. Palm-heart edible.



Dypsis leptocheilos. **A** leaf sheath $\times 1/5$; **B** mid section of leaf $\times 1/5$; **C** leaf tip $\times 1/5$; **D** first order inflorescence branch $\times 1/5$; **E** detail of rachilla $\times 2$; **F** seedling $\times c. 1/2$. All from *Hodel & Hodel* 1144. Drawn by Margaret Tebbs.