

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*.