

71. DYPsis THIRYANA

This is not only one of the most attractive small palms from Madagascar but also one of the most easily identified. The small wedge-shaped praemorse leaflets are found only in this species and in *D. trapezoidea*. In the field it can easily be overlooked as the leaflets give the leaves a rather unpalm-like appearance, one more reminiscent of a fern. This would clearly be a wonderful palm to grow as a pot plant; sadly, ripe fruit seem very rarely to be produced in quantity. The name refers to the collector of the type; we have been unable to find any details about him.

DISTRIBUTION. Marojejy and Masoala to Anosibe-an-Ala.

HABITAT. Lowland rain forest, slight to steep slope or ridgetop; 220–900 m.

LOCAL NAMES. *Tsinkiara*, *Sinkarambolavo maroampototra*, *Taokonampotatra* (Betsimisaraka).

USES. Meller says the plant is used for thatching; his specimen is all of 60 cm tall, roots included, and we would doubt his statement.

CONSERVATION STATUS. Rare. Spread over a fairly large area, though never common; usually a few individuals per population.

Dypsis thiryana (Becc.) Beentje & J. Dransf. **comb. nov.**

SYNONYM:

Neophloga thiryana Becc., Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 38, Beibl. 87: 23 (1906); *Palme del Madagascar* 24, fig. 17, t. 22 (1912); Jum., Ann. Inst. Bot.-Géol. Colon. Marseille sér. 4, 6 (3): 42 (1929); *Cat. Pl. Madagascar, Palmae*: 23 (1938); Jum. & H. Perrier, Fl. Madagascar 30: 82, fig. 23 (1945). Type: Madagascar, *Thiry* anno 1904 (P, holotype).

Clustering palm in tufts of 2–4 (solitary according to *Miller & Lowry* 3942, *Benoist* 862, and in the last specimen confirmed by roots). **STEMS** 0.1–1 m high (the type states 5 m, which we find hard to believe), 0.4–0.6 cm diam.; internodes 0.4–4 cm, brown, densely red-scaly; nodal scars 1–2 mm. **LEAVES** 8–10 in the crown, porrect; sheath 6–11 cm long, c. 0.6 cm diam., open for 1–2 cm, distally with dense red-brown and pale white scales, with rounded shoulders or with small triangular bumps to 2 mm high; petiole 1–18 cm long, 1.5–2 mm diam., densely scaly or with scattered scales; rachis 14–30 cm long, in mid-leaf 1–1.5 mm diam., densely scaly or with scattered scales; leaflets 9–14 on each side of the rachis, rich shiny green to dark green, almost regular or (more often) in groups of 2–3, the group interval 1–4 cm, the proximal 2–7 × 0.2–1.2 cm, the median 3–11 × 0.6–1.3 (–2.5) cm, cuneate at the base, with 1 (3) main vein(s), unequally praemorse and dentate at the apex, the distal half prolonged and with a dentate acumen, with some basal scales but glabrescent, rarely with the distal margin scaly,



Dypsis thiryana, in the undergrowth of forest on the Masoala Peninsula.



**Dypsis
thiryana**

distal 3–10 × 0.8–3.2 cm, connate for 1.2–3.2 cm, with 4 main veins, truncate and dentate for up to 4 cm. **INFLORESCENCE** interfoliar, erect, branched to 1 order (one unbranched in *Perrier* 17214); peduncle 12–26 cm long, 1.5–2 mm diam., ± glabrous; prophyll 10–17 cm long, to 3 mm wide, borne at up to 5 cm above the base of the peduncle, opening only near the apex, pale brown with scattered scales; peduncular bract inserted at 7–15 cm from the base of the peduncle, 6–11 cm long, opening only in the distal 2–3 cm, pale brown with scattered scales; second tubular peduncular bract often (always?) present at 12–20 cm from the base of the peduncle, 0.9–2.5 cm long, shortly tubular with a long acumens; non-tubular bract sometimes present near the rachis, 1.6 mm long; rachis 0–2.5 (–11.5) cm long, glabrous, with (1–) 2–4 (–8) rachillae; rachillae (2.5–) 6–15 cm long, c. 1 mm diam., glabrous, with distant superficial triads and white flowers. **STAMINATE FLOWERS** with sepals 0.7–1 × 0.8–1 mm, the outer more keeled than the inner, orbicular, ciliate; petals on a 0.6 mm high receptacle, 1.9–2.2 × 1–1.3 mm, elliptic or ovate, acute, striate; stamens 6, with the antepetalous filaments inserted slightly above the antesealous ones, filaments connate for 0.15 mm, 0.8–0.9 mm long, thin, anthers dorsifixed and versatile, 1.1–1.2 × 0.4 mm, the locules parallel, slightly apiculate; pistillode c. 0.5 × 0.2 mm. **PISTILLATE FLOWERS** with sepals imbricate, 1–1.3 × 1.3–1.5 mm, orbicular, ciliate; petals proximally ovate and imbricate, distally triangular, fleshy and valvate, 2.1–3.3 × 1.2–2.6 mm, striate; staminodes 6, 0.2–0.3 mm; ovary 1–2 × 0.8–1.5 mm, ovoid or ellipsoid with pointed apex. **FRUIT** bright red, ellipsoid, 9–11 × 3–5 mm. **SEED** c. 9 × 2–3 mm, with homogeneous endosperm. (Plate on next page).

NOTE. The Tsinkiarana on the type has been taken for a locality, but is actually a Betsimisaraka name for any small palm.

Baker briefly mentions the *Meller* specimen in a note under *N. rhodotricha* in J. Linn. Soc. 22: 526 (1887) as distinct, but refrains from naming it.

Perrier 17214 has an unbranched or bifid inflorescence.

SPECIMENS SEEN. Andapa: Marojejy NE, E of Ambalamanasy II, Nov.–Dec. 1948 (fl.), *Humbert & Capuron* 22171 (K, P); Marojejy E, NW of Mandena, Feb. 1989 (fl.), *Miller & Lowry* 3942 (K, P);

idem, Nov. 1989 (fl.), *Dransfield et al.* JD6750 (K, TAN). Maroantsetra: Antongil Bay area, Oct. 1912 (fl.), *Perrier* 11978 (P); Sahavary, Feb. 1988 (fl.), *Dransfield et al.* JD6460 (K, TAN); Hiaraka, Oct. 1986 (old infl.), *Dransfield et al.* JD6377 (K, TAN). Mananara Avaratra: 10 km W of Antanambe, April 1992 (y.fr.), *Beentje et al.* 4648 (K, TAN); idem, Oct. 1994 (fr.), *Beentje & Dransfield* 4811 (K, TAN). Soanierana-Ivongo: Soanierana to Antasibe, Dec. 1938 (fl.), *Lam & Meeuse* 5858 (L). Ampasimanolotra: Ambila, March 1951 (bud), *Benoist* 862 (P). Moramanga: Beforon (Beforona), July 1862 (ster.), *Meller* s.n. 31.7.1862 (K). Anosibe-an-Ala: near confluence of Mangoro R and Onive R, Feb. 1923 (y.fr.), *Perrier* 17214 (P).

LOCALITY UNCLEAR: eastern forest, 1904 (fl.), *Thiry* s.n. (Holotype P).

72. DYP SIS TRAPEZOIDEA

A beautiful species known at present only from the isolated hill, Vatovavy, southwest of Mananjary. First collected by Bosser, we had initially included it within the variation of *D. thiryana*, but newly collected specimens show abundant differences between the two. This would be a beautiful ornamental. The species name refers to the leaflets that are almost trapezoid in outline.

DISTRIBUTION. Known only from Vatovavy, Ifanadiana.

HABITAT. Steep rocky slope at foot of cliff, primary lowland forest.

LOCAL NAMES. Not recorded.

USES. Not recorded.

CONSERVATION STATUS. Critical. Single-site locality; site



**Dypsis
trapezoidea**