



Cissus Decaryi Wahlert & Phillipson (Vitaceae): A New Name for Madagascar

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Introduction

The *Vitaceae* of Madagascar and the Comoro Islands were last treated by DESCOINGS (1967) in the “Flore de Madagascar series”. In the course of evaluating the species diversity of *Cissus* for the Catalogue of Vascular Plants of Madagascar (MADAGASCAR CATALOGUE, 2011), *Cissus glossopetala* f. *oblongifolia* Desc. stood out as a highly distinctive entity from the typical *C. glossopetala* (Baker) Suss. In addition to obvious morphological differentiation, the two taxa have geographically distinct ranges. *Cissus glossopetala* is restricted to littoral and humid forests from sea level to ca. 100 m and is distributed along the north and east coast of Madagascar and in the Comoros Islands. *Cissus glossopetala* f. *oblongifolia* occurs in mid-elevation humid forests in central and south-eastern Madagascar. Given the morphological and ecological differentiation, we believe *C. glossopetala* f. *oblongifolia* deserves recognition at the rank of species. The new combination based on *C. glossopetala* f. *oblongifolia* is not available (the name *C. oblongifolia* Merr. has been validly published for a species from the Philippines), therefore, we propose the new name *C. decaryi* Wahlert & Phillipson, dedicated to Raymond Decary (1891-1973), collector of the type. Because *C. decaryi* is only known from two collections, we hope that recognizing this taxon as a full species will bring attention to it, in an effort to identify new populations.

Key to separate *Cissus decaryi* from *C. glossopetala*

1. Leaf deltoid or suborbicular, base cordate to truncate, 5-10 cm long (excluding basal lobes and acumen), 6-13.5 cm wide; petiole 2-6.5 cm long *C. glossopetala*

- 1a. Leaf lanceolate or oblong, base cuneate or truncate, 3-7 cm long (excluding acumen), 1-2.5 cm wide; petiole 0.8-1.2 cm long *C. decaryi*

Taxonomy and nomenclature

Cissus decaryi Wahlert & Phillipson, **nom. et stat. nova**
= *Cissus glossopetala* f. *oblongifolia* Desc. in Bull. Soc. Bot. France 113: 93. 1966.

Typus: MADAGASCAR. Prov. Toliara: Col du Tsitonga-barika [Tsitongambarika], district de Fort-Dauphin, 600 m, [24°39'S 47°03'E], 9.IX.1932, fl., *Decary 10597* (holo-: P [P00061294]!; iso-: P [P00061295]!).

Conservation status. – *Cissus decaryi* is restricted to mid-elevation humid forests from ca. 500-600 m, in Toliara and Fianarantsoa provinces. It is only known from two specimens and was last collected in 1932. The type specimen is located in the newly proclaimed Forêt de Tsitongambarika Category VI Protected Area (IUCN, 2011), however recent intensive fieldwork at this site has not revealed any new material and the species is clearly very rare at this locality. The other specimen (*Perrier de la Bâthie 4498*) was collected in the vicinity of Vatovavy Mountain, Fianarantsoa Prov. in 1911. The forests on Vatovavy are highly fragmented and degraded and it is very likely that *C. decaryi* no longer exists there. It is possible that it could be present in nearby Ranomafana National Park, although it has never been found at this relatively well-collected site. With an estimated AOO of 18 km² only two known subpopulations, one occurring in a protected area (Tsitongambarika) but not collected since 1932, but with the other inferred to be severely reduced, and with further reduction expected, or even possibly extinct, and is therefore assigned a preliminary status of “Critically Endangered” (CR A2ac; D) following IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria (IUCN, 2001) (calculations following CALLMANDER & al., 2007).

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