



The Euro+Med treatment of Hedera (Araliaceae) — recent studies and a new name

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The Euro+Med treatment of *Hedera* (*Araliaceae*) – recent studies and a new name

Abstract

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For the treatment of the *Hedera* taxa present in the territories included in the Euro+Med PlantBase project a new name is required and here validated, *Hedera rhizomatifera*, based on *Hedera helix* subsp. *rhizomatifera*.

The genus *Hedera* has been subject to a number of studies in recent years, chiefly by McAllister (in *Watsonia* 18: 7-15. 1990), Rutherford & al. (in *Plantsman* 15: 115-128. 1993), Vargas & al. (in *Pl. Syst. Evol.* 219: 165-179. 1999), Valcárcel & Vargas (in *Anales Jard. Bot. Madrid* 59: 363-368. 2002), Ackerfield & Wen (in *Adansonia*, ser. 3, 24: 197-212. 2002), Valcárcel & al. (in *Molec. Phylog. Evol.* 27: 1-20. 2003) and Jury & al. (in press). These have stirred up considerable controversy amongst ivy enthusiasts in the horticultural world, though supporting the radical treatment presented by McAllister & Rutherford (in *Cullen & al.*, *Eur. Gard. Fl.* 5: 375-380. 1997) and Valcárcel & al. (in *Castroviejo*, *Fl. Iber.* 10: 3-12. 2003). Current editorial work for an EU-sponsored project to work on Euro+Med PlantBase, a new electronic plant information system for Europe, the extra countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea and Macaronesia, has brought to light some further anomalies in the nomenclature and taxonomy of the genus.

Hedera helix L. subsp. *rhizomatifera* was described by McAllister in 1993 for an unusual plant cultivated in the Liverpool University Botanic Garden, UK, originating from Prov. Huelva, Aracena area, April 1974, *N. & J. Rutherford* (LIV), and is known so far only from the provinces of Huelva, Sevilla, Cadíz, Málaga, Granada, Jaén, Cuenca, Castellón and Tarragona in southern and eastern Spain. It produces underground stolons, often of considerable length, clearly seen in pot cultivation when the plant produces numerous stems through the drainage holes in the base. The juvenile leaves are dark green, more or less uniform in size and shape, usually with three lobes rather than five, not showing the considerable variation to the adult type, with raised white silver veins on the surface and with trichomes appressed to the leaf surface. A clear separation is strongly

supported by the work of Ackerfield & Wen (2002) and I believe this taxon is best represented as a species in its own right, if the related *H. hibernica* (Kirchner) Bean and *H. azorica* Carrière are also separated and recognized at the specific level:

Hedera rhizomatifera (McAllister) Jury, **stat. nov.** \equiv *Hedera helix* subsp. *rhizomatifera* McAllister in *Plantsman* 15: 118, 119. 1993.

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