

**OLEA PALAWANENSIS (OLEACEAE),
A NEW SPECIES FROM THE PHILIPPINES**

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INTRODUCTION

Since the revision of *Olea* for the Malesian region (Kiew, 1979), specimens of an interesting new species have been collected from Palawan Island, Philippines. It is interesting, not only because it is distinctive, but because it is the only Malesian *Olea* which grows on ultrabasic soil and, as it has been collected only from forest on this soil type, it suggests that it may be confined to it.

Olea palawanensis Kiew, *spec. nov.*

Ab aliis speciebus Malesianis in petiolis brevioribus et foliis basi cordatis differt.

Shrub to 3 m tall, multistemmed. *Twigs* moderately stout, drying whitish-grey, nodes flattened, glabrous. *Lamina* broadly elliptic to elliptic-oblong, sometimes broadly ovate, 4.5–10 by 2.5–5 cm, apex acute or retuse, base cordate, thickly coriaceous, glabrous, drying olive-green, minutely punctate beneath. Margin slightly recurved, some leaves minutely and distantly crenate. Veins usually 6–9 pairs (broadly ovate leaves c. 4.5 by 3.5 cm with 1 or 2 pairs of longitudinal veins), midrib and veins plane above, veins scarcely prominent beneath. Marginal vein 2–4 mm from margin. *Petiole* 0.4–0.6 cm long, thickened, drying black. *Inflorescence* panicate, solitary, axillary, 2–3 cm long, peduncle short, branches c. 1–1.5 cm long, glabrous, male inflorescence with clusters of c. 7 flowers crowded at tips of branches; hermaphrodite inflorescence fewer flowered. Bracts scarious, ovate, apex apiculate, 1–2 mm long, glabrous, caducous. Pedicel c. 1 mm long. *Flowers* polygamous, yellowish, buds rounded. *Hermaphrodite flowers* with fleshy receptacle c. 0.5 mm long. *Calyx* 1 mm long, divided to base, lobes acute, \pm erect, glabrous with ciliate margin. *Corolla* 2 mm long, tube thin, c. 1 mm long, lobes oblong, thin, hooded, straight at anthesis. *Stamens* 2, sessile, attached at top of corolla tube, anthers \pm globose, c. 0.5 mm long, connective broad. *Ovary* ovoid, c. 1 mm long, glabrous, stigma sessile and capitate. *Male flowers* different in *calyx*, 0.5 mm long, lobes shallow and spreading; *corolla* 1.5 mm long; *stamens* 1 mm long; *ovary* completely absent. Infructescence slightly thickened, to 3 cm long, pedicel 1–2 mm long. *Fruits* (?immature) ovoid, apex apiculate, 0.6 by 0.4 cm. Pericarp minutely rugose, drying with a white bloom, thin and brittle. *Seed* unknown.

Distribution — Malesia: Phillippines, Palawan.

Habitat — Primary or disturbed forest on ultrabasic soil in very stunted open forest at 100–200 m altitude.

Specimens examined: Narra Victoria Peaks, *Ridsdale SMHI 1827* (flowers hermaphrodite), 22 May 1984 (holo L); St Paul's Bay, Mt Bloomfield, *Ridsdale SMHI 1609* (fl. male), 5 May 1984 (K, L); *Reynosa, Proctor et al. 502* (sterile), Aug.–Sep. 1986 (L).

DISCUSSION

This distinctive species is undoubtedly an *Olea* as it has polygamous flowers with rounded buds, a corolla which is only divided halfway, toothed leaves and small fruits with a thin, brittle pericarp.

No other species of *Olea* in Malesia has cordate leaves and short, thickened petioles which dry black. The leaves are thickly coriaceous and show considerable variation in the degree of serration. For example, the number of teeth on one side of the lamina on leaves on a single twig varies from none to one (*Ridsdale SMHI 1609*) to from none to 13 teeth (*Reynosa, Proctor et al. 502*). The leaves appear upstanding but field notes do not confirm this.

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REFERENCE

Kiew, R. 1979. *Florae Malesianae Praecursores*. LX. The Oleaceae of Malesia. II. The genus *Olea*. *Blumea* 25: 305–313.