



A new species of *Rubia* (Rubiaceae) from western Yunnan, China

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Abstract

A new species of Rubiaceae, *Rubia pianmaensis*, is described and illustrated from western Yunnan, China. Morphologically, it is similar to *Rubia siamensis*, but differs from the latter by having larger stipules, 5-6-merous flowers, and shorter inflorescences.

Key words: Gaoligong Mountains, Rubiaceae, taxonomy

Introduction

The genus *Rubia* Linnaeus (1753: 109) includes about 80 species distributed in temperate Asia, Himalaya, South Africa, Mediterranean, West Europe, Macaronesia, and the Azores (Wu *et al.* 2006, Mabberley 2008). Thirty-eight species are distributed in China, 20 of which are endemic (Chen & Ehrendorfer 2011).

During the past fifteen years, a series of expeditions to the western Yunnan for the project “Biodiversity Survey of Gaoligong Mountains” have been carried out by the Kunming Institute of Botany, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Department of Botany, California Academy of Sciences. During these expeditions, we collected some interesting *Rubia* specimens. Among them, we found one taxon with a combination of morphological features not found in any other *Rubia* species. After a morphological study, literature search (Pojarkova 1958, Li 1994, Yang 1998, Long 1999, Luo 1999, Chen 2003, Chen & Ehrendorfer 2011), and examination of many other specimens in the KUN and IBSC herbaria, we concluded that the taxon represents a new species, which is described and illustrated below.

Taxonomy

Rubia pianmaensis R. Li & H. Li, *sp. nov.* (Fig. 1)

Species *Rubiam siamensem* Craib *affinis*, *sed stipulae majores, ad 1.5–5.5 × 1.7–4.5 cm, flores 5-6-meris, inflorescentiis brevis, 3–5 cm longi differt.*

Type:—CHINA. Yunnan: Lushui County, Pianma township, Ganheluo, 8.5 km SE of Pianma, subtropical evergreen broad-leaved forest disturbed by felling and clearing, growing along the roadside in forest undercanopy, 2160 m, 26°02'55"N, 98°36'51"E, 13 May 2005, *Gaoligong Shan Biodiversity Survey 22830* (holotype KUN!, isotypes CAS!, E!).

Climbing vines, herbaceous; stems 3–5 m long, green to dark purple, quadrangular, inconspicuous 4-ribbed when dried, 3–4 mm in diameter, glabrous. Stipules large, sessile, green, persistent, broadly ovate, 1.5–5.5 × 1.7–4.5 cm, glabrous, apex acute, base obtuse, secondary veins 7–9 each side. Leaves opposite; petioles green to dark purple, 2–4.5 cm long, retrorsely aculeolate; blades ovate to narrowly ovate, 4.5–14 × 2.5–6.5 cm, papyraceous, base cordate, apex acuminate to long acuminate, sometimes falcate, green adaxially, light green abaxially, glabrous on both surfaces, retrorsely aculeolate along the principal veins, margins aculeolate; secondary veins 5 each side, palmate, impressed adaxially, lateral veins inconspicuous. Inflorescences