



A new species of *Chalybea* (Blakeeae, Melastomataceae) from the Ecuador-Peru border

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Abstract

A new species, *Chalybea brevipedunculata*, from the Ecuador-Peru border is herein described and illustrated. It differs from all other species in the genus by having inflorescence peduncles that are shorter than their subtending leaf petioles.

Resumen

Se describe y se ilustra una nueva especie, *Chalybea brevipedunculata*, procedente de la frontera entre Ecuador y Perú. Se diferencia de todas las demás especies en el género por tener el pedúnculo de la inflorescencia más corto que los pecíolos de las hojas subyacentes.

Key words: *Chalybea*, Melastomataceae, Andes, Cordillera del Cóndor, endemic

Introduction

The genus *Chalybea* Naudin (1850 [1851]: 99) was originally described as monotypic with one species from Colombia. Triana (1871) reduced it to synonymy of *Pachyanthus* A. Richard (1845: 264), a Caribbean and Central American genus. Cogniaux (1891) followed Triana's classification, and corrected an orthographic error in the specific epithet. Wurdack established the genus *Huilaea* (Wurdack 1957: 106) that eventually grew to comprise eight species, all centered in the Andes of Colombia and Ecuador. Wurdack (1988) reestablished *Chalybea* and commented on its close affinity to *Huilaea*, and the distinctiveness of these two genera from *Pachyanthus*. A second species of *Chalybea* from Peru has been described (Morales-Puentes & Penneys, 2010: 28). Recent phylogenetic studies based on morphological and molecular data demonstrated that these two genera form a clade within an expanded concept of the tribe Blakeeae (Morales-Puentes 2010; Penneys & Judd, 2011, 2013a, b); furthermore, morphological and molecular phylogenetic analyses indicated (Penneys & Judd, 2013b) that *Chalybea* is nested within *Huilaea*, thus the latter was placed within the synonymy of the former (Penneys & Judd 2013a, Morales-Puentes & Penneys 2015, Penneys & Morales-Puentes 2015). *Chalybea* as currently understood is characterized by the terrestrial habit, foliar pin-wheel type acarodomatia, truncate monotelic synflorescences, flowers subtended by a single pair of narrow, caducous bracts, lenticellate hypanthia, pseudocampanulate corollas, laterally rounded anthers that are white to cream in color, and yellowish-green fruits with a thick, leathery exocarp. The genus comprises eleven species: seven are endemic to Colombia, three to Ecuador, and one to Peru. All are found in the Andes between 1975 and 3050 m, including one species that is restricted to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia.

Explorations of the remote Cordillera del Cóndor in southern Ecuador have yielded interesting discoveries of new