

A NEW SPECIES OF *VACCINIUM* (*ERICACEAE*) FROM THE PHILIPPINES

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Vaccinium oscarlopezianum (sect. *Bracteata* Nakai) (*Ericaceae*), known only from two sites in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Luzon, Philippines, is formally described.

Keywords. Sect. *Bracteata*, *Ericaceae*, Philippines, *Vaccinium*.

INTRODUCTION

In the Harvard University Herbaria is a sheet of *Vaccinium* annotated by the late Dr Hermann Sleumer as a new species. No formal name was given, since the specimen, *Jacobs* 7691, collected in 1968 from Dingalan, Aurora (then Quezon Province), was collected only in fruit. The fruit of Malesian *Vaccinium* species gives little help in identification at the species level, and Dr Sleumer was probably reluctant to describe incomplete material that could not be keyed. Flowering material was subsequently found in 1991.

***Vaccinium oscarlopezianum* L. Co, sp. nov. Fig. 1.**

Frutex epiphyticus *V. platyphyllo* affinis, sed bracteis multo majoribus foliis subsessilibus basi cordatis (non cuneatis) differt.

Type: Philippines, Luzon Island, Isabela Province, San Mariano municipality, Barangay Disulap, Dappig Creek, 16°56.5'N, 122°13'E, 25 ii 1991, *L. Co* 3326 (holo. PNH; iso. A, CAHUP, K, L, PUH, US).

Epiphytic shrub to 4m. *Branchlets* longitudinally grooved when dry, glabrous or occasionally with a very short patent pubescence. *Leaves* laxly spirally arranged, subsessile, broadly elliptic to subcircular, leathery, 40–80 × 20–42mm; apex obtusely pointed, occasionally rounded; base cordate; margin entire, flat, with a narrow marginal band which is conspicuously hairy when young, glabrescent in older leaves; with two obscure marginal glands 2–3mm above junction with petiole. Midvein broad and prominent above for the basal 5–7mm, then slender and slightly raised above and below, with up to four basal lateral veins radiating away from the broad basal portion and with one or two prominent laterals spreading acutely from further up the leaf; all then curving and disappearing before the margin, reticulation rather

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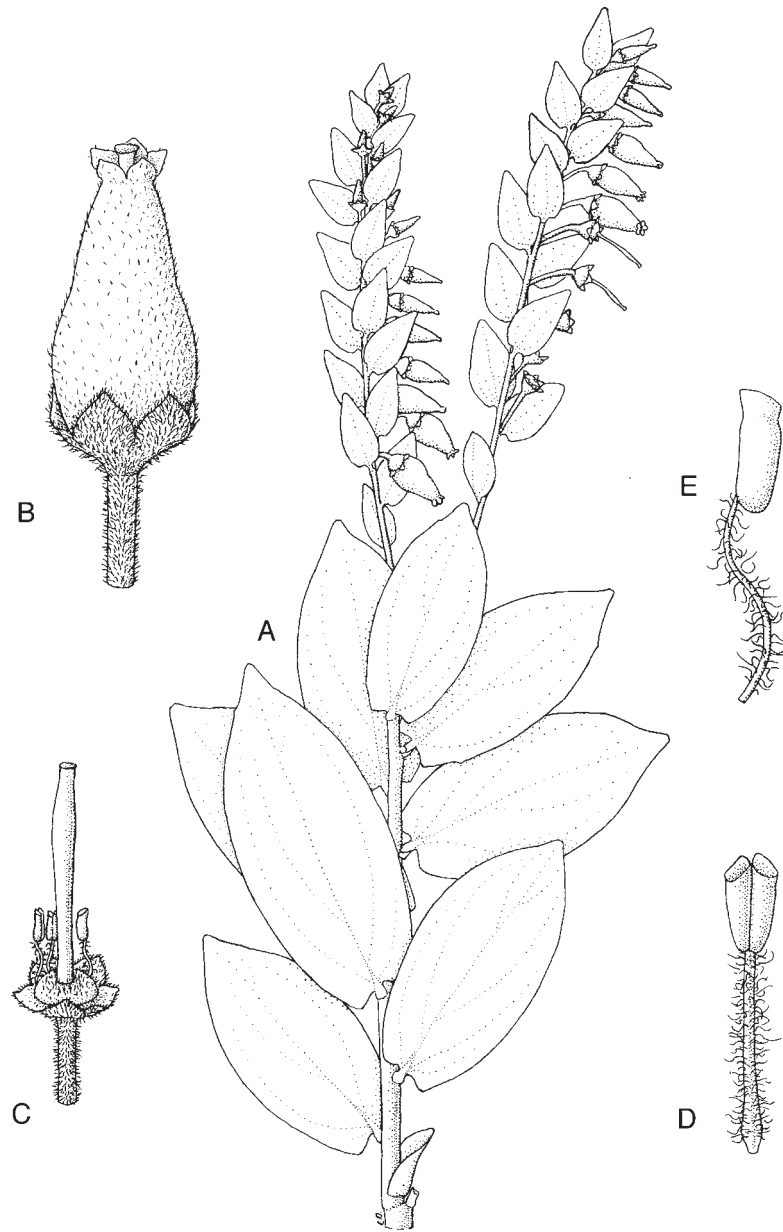


FIG. 1. *Vaccinium oscarlopezianum*. A, habit (actual size); B, flower ($\times 6$); C, flower with corolla and some stamens removed ($\times 6$); D, stamen front view ($\times 10$); E, stamen side view ($\times 10$).

obscure. *Petiole* broad, dark, $2-3 \times 2-3$ mm. *Racemes* in upper leaf axils, 8–15 cm long, 7–16-flowered, densely short-hairy especially so along the rhachis, pedicels and calyx; rhachis angular, 1–1.5 mm in diameter. *Bracts* leaf-like, narrowly ovate to

ovate, fully persistent at flowering, to $c.20 \times 10$ mm, moderately densely hairy in all parts. *Flowers* secund, the pedicels at flowering $3-5 \times c.1$ mm, lengthening as the fruit develops to at least 10mm. *Calyx tube* cup-shaped, $c.2$ mm, the lobes triangular, $c.1.7 \times 1.7$ mm, the apex broadly acute or obtuse, often with somewhat inrolled margins towards the apex, entirely without callose glands. *Corolla* shortly hairy outside, glabrous within, urceolate-cylindric, white with pink lobes, to 10×4 mm, the lobes erect, $c.0.6 \times 0.4$ mm, with a few hairs on the outer side. *Stamens* 10, 5–7mm, the filaments slender, hairy throughout, $c.4 \times 0.6$ mm, anther cells oblong, the base obtuse, $c.2.4$ mm, without spurs; the tubules short, 0.4mm, hardly differentiated from the cells, the pores oblique. *Disk* densely white pubescent with erect hairs. *Style* $c.12$ mm, slender, straight, glabrous, slightly broadening upwards for about two-thirds of its length and then slightly tapering to the circular stigma. *Fruit* (immature and dry) subspherical, $c.6$ mm in diameter.

Distribution. Philippines, Luzon.

Ecology. Fairly open sites such as streams and logging trails, altitude 490–740m. Collected in flower in February and fruiting in March.

Conservation status. Fairly common in the vicinity of the type locality. Thus far known from two sites that are $c.175$ km apart.

Etymology. Named in honour of Mr Oscar M. Lopez, eminent Filipino industrialist and conservation advocate, for his commitment and leadership in biodiversity conservation in the Philippines, particularly in the Sierra Madre Biodiversity Conservation Corridor where this new species was discovered.

Additional specimens examined. Luzon, Aurora Province, Sierra Madre Mountains NNW of Dingalan, Jacobs 7691 (A!, K, L, PNH, US, *c. fr.*); Isabela Province, San Mariano municipality, Barangay Disulap, logging trail between Dimahahabong and Dappig bivouacs, $16^{\circ}56.7'N$, $122^{\circ}13.5'E$, logged *Dipterocarp* forest, 740m, 28 ii 1991, L. Co 3347 (A, PNH, *c. fl.*).

Vaccinium oscarlopezianum clearly belongs in section *Bracteata* Nakai, which is characterized by well-developed and usually many-flowered racemes, short calyx lobes and anther tubules opening by short slits or pores. This is the largest section in the *Flora Malesiana* treatment (Sleumer, 1967), with 163 species, 29 of which are recorded from the Philippines, all but one being endemic to the archipelago. In that account it keys out to the first subgroup (couplet 1) with its large, leaf-like bracts which are fully persistent during flowering, and then to *V. hooglandii* Sleumer, known only from Papua New Guinea. This species differs from *V. hooglandii* in its much smaller flowers, which are glabrous outside and hairy within, and in many other characters. It would be a most unlikely distribution pattern (Luzon to New Guinea) and any close relationship can probably be discounted. The last couplet in the key suggests *V. platyphyllum* Merr., a Philippine species also from Luzon, but *V. platyphyllum* differs in the basal leaf shape (cuneate not cordate), and in bracts which are only about half the dimensions of the present species; the flowers are also much smaller (up to 6mm). If the leaves are taken as initially hairy all over

(couplet 8 in the key to the section; Sleumer, 1967: 792) it would bring into consideration *V. indutum* Vidal and *V. trichocarpum* Sleumer. The first of these two species has much larger flowers (especially the stamens) than in this new species, and the second has much smaller flowers and leaves with pinnate veins and is known only from Mindanao.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Christina Oliver for drawing the figure, the Trustees of the Herbarium of the Arnold Arboretum for the loan of specimens, and Dr Robert Mill for translation of the Latin diagnosis.

REFERENCE

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Received 29 October 2001; accepted after minor revision 11 June 2002