

NOMOCHARIS PARDANTHINA

J. R. SEALY*

ABSTRACT. The correct name for the plant known in cultivation as *Nomocharis mairei* (Liliaceae) is shown to be *N. pardanthina*. The plant is illustrated, its variation discussed and a new form described.

Nomocharis pardanthina Franchet in Journ. de Bot. 3:113, t. 3 (1851); Forrest in Journ. R.H.S. 42:54 (1916).

Inter congeneros recognoscenda foliis plerumque verticillatis ellipticis vel lanceolatis rare ovatis, perigoniiis patentibus albis vel roseis omnino purpureo-maculatis vel in forma *punctulata* ad basin solum punctatis, raro albis emaculatis et epunctatis, tepalorum interioris nectariis flabelliformibus et marginibus eroso-laceratis vel in forma *punctulata* minute erosis vel sub-integris, filamentis crassis cylindraceis.

Syn.: *N. leucantha* Balf. f. in Trans. Bot. Soc. Edinb. 27: 276 (1918); Sims in The Garden 85:360, cum fig. (1921).

N. mairei Léveillé in Fedde, Rep. Sp. Nov. 12:287 (1913); Balf. f. in Trans. Bot. Soc. Edinb. 27:281 (1918); W. E. Evans in Notes R.B.G. Edinb. 15:27-30, t. 206, 211b (1925); Journ. R.H.S. 56:15, 16, fig. 12 (1931); *l.c.* 58, Proc. xxvii (1933); *l.c.* 60:465 (1936); Gard. Chron. Ser. 3, 82:466, fig. 216 (1927); *l.c.* 91:336, fig. 153 (1932); Wilkie in R.H.S. Lily Year Book 1946, 10:106 (1946); Woodcock & Stearn, Lilies of the World 384, 387 (1950); Sealy in Kew Bull. 5:273, fig. 1 A-C (1950); R.H.S. Dict. Gard. 3: 1378 (1951); Cowan, Journ. & Pl. Introd. G. Forrest 195 (1952); R.H.S. Lily Year Book 1953, 16:119 (1952); Knox Finlay, *l.c.* 1954, 17:40, 43, fig. 12 (1953); A. Evans, *l.c.* 1957, 20:129, fig. 24, 25 (1956); *l.c.* 136, 142, fig. 27; *l.c.* 1959, 22:195 (1958); *l.c.* 1960, 23:101, 103, 108-110, t. 6 (1959); Skeen, *l.c.* 1961, 24:35, 36 (1960); Butler, *l.c.* 1963, 26:75, 81 et al. (1962); *l.c.* 1964, 27:160 (1963); *l.c.* 1965, 28:80, 81, 83 (1964); Butler, *l.c.* 1966, 29:141 (1965).

N. mairei f. *leucantha* (Balf. f.) W. E. Evans in Notes R.B.G. Edinb. 5:29 (1925).

N. mairei f. *candida* W. E. Evans, *l.c.* 29 (1925).

The plant illustrated here (fig. 1) is the one generally cultivated in the British Isles under the name *N. mairei*, and was, in fact, grown under that name in the Edinburgh Botanic Garden in 1939 when a painting of it was made by Miss Stella Ross-Craig. From this painting Miss Ross-Craig has prepared the present illustration.

The genus *Nomocharis* was founded on specimens collected by Père Delavay on 2 June 1883 on the Tsang-shan above Tali, NW Yunnan (Delavay 257), and was distinguished in the Liliaceae by the wide-spreading perigone, rose-coloured and conspicuously blotched all over with violet-brown (fide

* Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AE.



FIG. 1. *Nomocharis pardanthina* Franchet. S. Ross-Craig, del.

Delavay) with the margins of the inner tepals conspicuously erose-lacerate, by the nectarial area at the base of the inner tepals comprising low thin flanges of tissue standing erect and arranged flabellately on either side of the basal channel, and by the staminal filaments being fleshy and cylindrical and bearing at the top a short needle-like projection (aciculus) to which the anther is attached at the back a short distance above its base. The material was named *Nomocharis pardanthina* and the species was subsequently collected widely in Yunnan and the adjacent part of Szechuan. Some of the Forrest specimens from Yunnan were described by Professor Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour as *N. leucantha*, which he compared with *N. mairei*, and to that species Mr W. Evans later reduced it. *N. mairei* was described from specimens collected at Ta Hai, NE Yunnan, and, like *N. leucantha*, differs from *N. pardanthina* only in the ground-colour of the perigone being white instead of rose or pink.

Comparison of the original material of *N. pardanthina* with that of *N. mairei* shows that in all other respects, vegetative as well as floral characters, the two species agree with one another, and it is reasonable to accept them as forming a single species variable in the ground-colour of its perigone. The reason why neither Professor Balfour nor Mr Evans associated *N. mairei* with *N. pardanthina* was that they accepted as the latter species, plants which differed widely in having a pinkish perigone with small darker spots for only a short distance at the base, and inner tepals with margins undulate or shallowly erose. The flowers of their *N. pardanthina*, which was known to them from living plants in cultivation, are remarkably like those of *N. farreri* (for which see Bot. Mag. t. 9557, 1939), a circumstance which could well have influenced Mr Evans when he reduced *N. farreri* to a variety of *N. pardanthina*.

Mr A. Evans (*l.c. supra*) has reported that a plant of *N. mairei* growing in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, bore bulbils along the stem, and that from these bulbils plants have been grown which also produced bulbils.

As already mentioned, the material which Franchet described and figured as *N. pardanthina* had the perigone pinkish and blotched all over with darker colour and the inner tepals erose-lacerate. However, apart from the maculation of the perigone and the toothing of the margins of the inner tepals, *N. pardanthina* of Balfour and Evans agrees with *N. pardanthina* Franchet, and can well be distinguished as a form of that species, thus:

N. pardanthina Franchet forma *punctulata* Sealy, forma nova a forma *pardanthina* tepalis ad basin punctatis nec omnino maculatis, tepalis interioribus cum marginibus minute erosis vel subintegris nec eroso-laceratis distincta.

Syn.: *N. pardanthina* sec. Gard. Chron. ser. 3, 59:314, fig. 138 (1916); The Garden, 80:295, cum fig. (1916) sphalm. *Monocharis*; Journ. R.H.S. 42: Proc. clxi (1917); Balf. f. in Trans. Bot. Soc. Edinb. 27:273-6, 291, 293 (1918); J. H. Watson in The Garden 83:275, cum fig. (1919); W. E. Evans in Notes R.B.G. Edinb. 15:19-23 (1925); R.H.S. Lily Year Book 1946, 10:109, fig. 22, 25 (1946); Woodcock & Stearn, Lilies of the World 384, 388 (1950); R.H.S. Dict. Gard. 3:1378 (1951); *omnia quoad plantas forrestii*.

W YUNNAN: E boundary of Lichiang [Likiang] Valley, 27° 25' N, 11000 ft, vi 1910, Forrest 5816 (holo. K; iso. BM, E); Lichiang Range, anno 1933,

Chinese collector—McLaren/23A (BM) et McLaren/L 30 (BM); Sungkwe Pass between Likiang and Hoking, south Likiang, 12000 ft, vii-viii 1932, *Rock* 25213 (BM, E, K); Yun-lu shan, SW of Likiang snow range, Yangtze-Mekong watershed, 12500 ft, viii 1932, *Rock* 25051 (K); Yun-lu shan, between Chienchuan plain and Mekong drainage basin to Lachiming, 9000 ft, v 1923, *Rock* 8591 (BM, E); Shweli-Salwin divide, 25° 40' N, 10000-11000 ft, viii 1919, *Forrest* 18274 (K).

It was this f. *punctulata* that was introduced into cultivation in Britain by George Forrest, and a plant grown at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh under *Forrest* 5816 was shown to the Royal Horticultural Society on 6 June 1916 under the name *N. pardanthina*, when a First-class Certificate was awarded to the species. The event was well-reported, and since both Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour and Mr Evans regarded this form as typical *N. pardanthina* and treated *N. mairei* as specifically distinct, it followed that this view was widely accepted. However, it is now clear that it is *N. mairei* which is typical *N. pardanthina*, and that the plant in cultivation as *N. pardanthina* is a form of the species.

Forrest's field-note for his 5816 reads: "Plant of 1-1½ ft. Flowers dull rose, deepest on exterior, spotted crimson with a deep maroon blotch at base. Open situations on margins of pine forests on the range bounding the east of the Lichiang valley. Lat. 27° 25' N, alt. 11000 ft, June 1910".