

*DIMORPHANTHERA WICKENDENIANA*: A NEW SPECIES FROM  
PAPUA, INDONESIAN NEW GUINEA

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ABSTRACT

A new species of *Dimorphanthera* is described and figured. Collected in 1993 from Indonesian New Guinea (Papua) by the late Michael Wickenden, this plant is distinct in the unique combination of characters that it possesses.

*DIMORPHANTHERA WICKENDENIANA* ARGENT SPECIES NOVA

*Type*: Indonesia, Papua, vicinity of Lake Habbema, between 4 January 1993 and 6 February 1993, Michael Wickenden 175 (RBGE Accession 19941462 cultivated collection 2 v 2017) (holo: BO, iso: E).

*Diagnosis*: Distinct in the combination of characters: densely patently hairy stems; leaves with minutely crenulate margins; 3–5 pli-nerved venation; fasciculate inflorescences lacking a rachis; laxly hairy corollas and a glabrous disk.

*Description*: Shrub to c. 2m, spreading. Twigs robust to slender, terete, densely patently hairy. Leaves lax narrowly ovate to elliptic, the apex sub-abruptly and shortly 1–2cm acuminate, base rounded; basal glands small but distinct, stiff and coriaceous, laxly hairy and with small glandular hairs on the lamina beneath, more densely hairy on the veins and margin, glabrous above, 10–17 × 4–8cm, the margin, minutely and remotely toothed, the teeth caduceous and leaving a minutely crenulate edge, 3–5 pli-nerved, the veins arising a little above the base of the leaf high ascending the laterals disappearing just below the apex, reticulation obscure; petiole densely hairy, 6–8 × 2.5–4mm. Inflorescence a fascicle, without a distinct rachis, 7 flowered, from foliate axils. Pedicels thick, 10–20 × c. 4mm, laxly hairy. Bracteoles basal. Calyx green, articulated with the pedicel, the tube cup-shaped, the base rounded, c. 8 × 8mm, limb low c. 2mm, broadly 5-lobed to halfway. Corolla cylindrical, slightly widened just above halfway, 30–32 × c. 15mm, pink, laxly hairy outside, fleshy, the lobes broadly triangular c. 5 × 8mm, reflexed, white. Stamens 12–13 and 10mm; major stamens, filaments densely shortly appressed hairy, almost glabrous at the base, the hairs becoming longer distally towards the connective; cells narrowly oblongoid although broadening distally towards the

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pores, the base subacute and curved inwards 8–11.5mm, including the divergent tubules; connective free to the base of the pores and hairy to the apex, a little shorter than the anther pores. Disk glabrous, style glabrous, exerted to 5mm on the lower side of the mouth. Fruit not seen.

*Ecology:* Collected in the Lake Habbema region which is a sub-montane area with a mixture of open *Papuacedrus* forest and ericaceous shrubbery interspersed with open grassy areas at about 3,500m altitude. This plant was described as a tall shrub but would probably have been growing at a shrubbery margin. In cultivation it is a sprawling shrub.

*Distribution:* Known only from the type collection.

*Etymology:* Named after the late Michael Wickenden, collector of this plant, horticulturist and naturalist who collected many rare and interesting plants for his plant nursery at Gatehouse of Fleet, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland.

#### DISCUSSION

Stevens (1974, 2004) discusses the generic relationships of the Papuasian Vaccinieae; the present plant clearly falls within the presently circumscribed genus of *Dimorphanthera*. This new species keys in Sleumer (1967) to *D. brassii* Sleumer; it differs from this species in the densely patently hairy twigs (vs glabrous), the minutely crenulate leaf margin, (vs entire), the 3–5 pli-nerved leaves (vs 7 pli-nerved), the complete absence of any measurable rachis, the corolla not obscurely angled but completely rounded, laxly not densely hairy outside, the shorter stamens, 12–13mm long (vs 16–20mm) and the disc glabrous (vs densely hairy or tomentulose). It keys in Stevens (2004) to *D. anchorifera* J.J.Sm. From that species it differs in many of the same characters to those of *D. brassii* but particularly in not possessing the distinctive anchor-like projections at the base of the anthers that *D. anchorifera* displays.

The collector noted that in the wild this was a tall shrub, the flowers being eaten by the local people as they were sweet, the tubular corollas no doubt accumulating considerable quantities of nectar. Flowers of a *Vaccinium* species were similarly eaten in the Wissel Lakes region of Papua by small boys (pers. obs.). This plant has proved to be very slow-growing in cultivation, apparently only flowering for the first time some 24 years after having been brought back as cuttings but no doubt constricted by pot culture. It has a sprawling habit in cultivation in contrast to the description of the wild plant as erect and may well be one of the many species of *Dimorphanthera* which are unspecialised climbers. It is cultivated with most of the other tropical Ericaceae as described by Conlon (2012). Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) records indicate that the plant was collected on 1 July 1993. This is probably the date on which material was donated to the Edinburgh Garden as, according to his diaries, Michael was only in Indonesian New Guinea between 4 January and 6 February 1993.

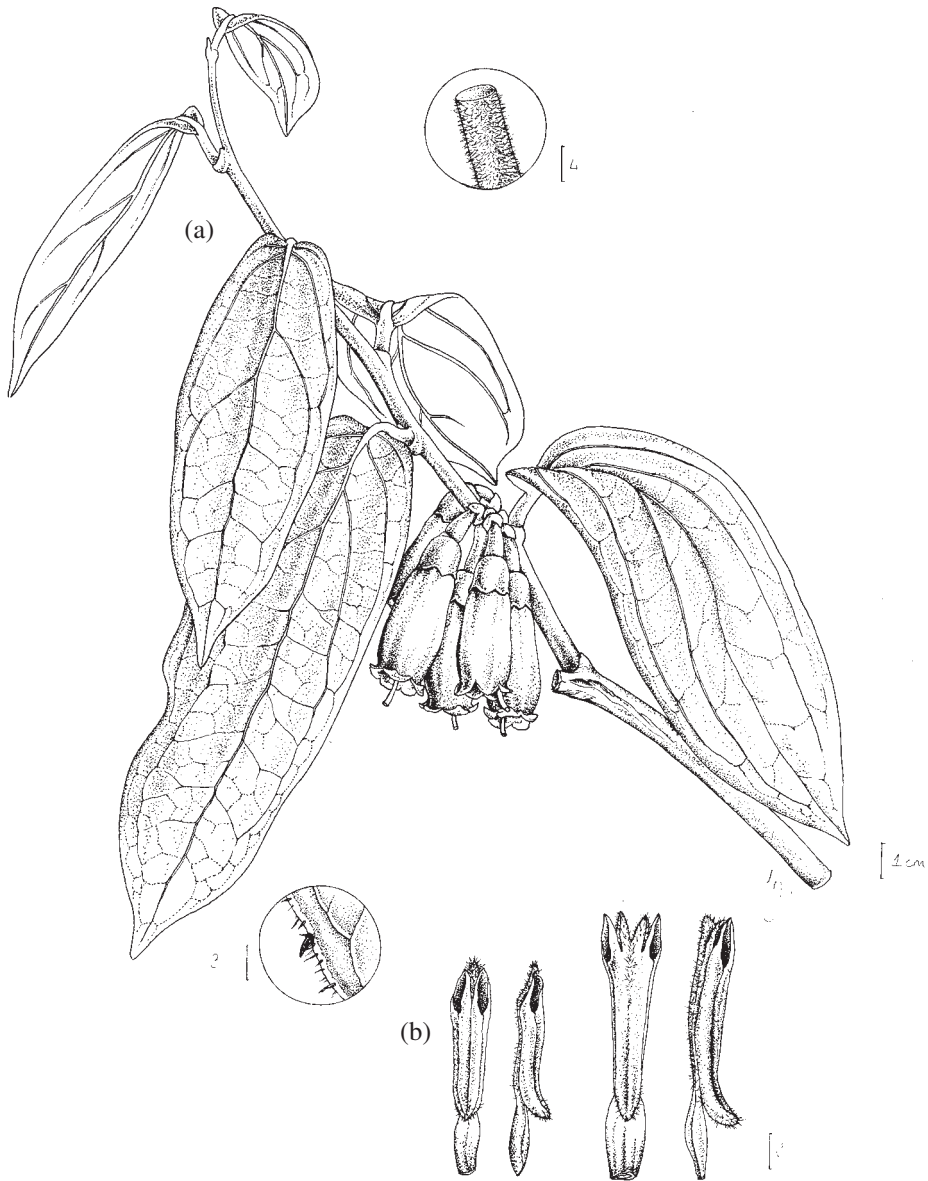


Fig. 1 (a) Habit, inset showing hairy stem (above) and hairy and toothed leaf margin (below). (b) Stamens, long and short, front and side views. Illustration by Işık Güner.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Fig. 2 The plant  
flowering at RBGE.  
Photo: Tony Conlon.

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