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FICUS ALONGENSIS (MORACEAE) RECOVERED AND REDEFINED

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SUMMARY

Ficus alongensis Gagnep. is reinstated and redefined.

Key words: Moraceae, *Ficus*, East Asia.

INTRODUCTION

During an abortive attempt to prepare the Moraceae for the English version of the Flora of China, which started with examination of material in the herbarium of Kunming (KUN), it became clear that among material referred to *F. concinna* Miq. (Miq.) (var. *subsessilis* Corner), *F. maclellandii* King, and *F. microcarpa* L.f. a poorly defined species was hidden. Further studies made it clear that this material matches more or less clearly the type of *F. alongensis* Gagnep. (1927), which has been reduced to a variety of *F. superba* Miq. with a note (Corner, 1960, 1965) that it possibly represents a xerophytic state of *F. superba* var. *japonica* Miq. (Corner, 1960), which is currently included in *F. subpisocarpa* Gagnep. (see Berg & Corner, 2005). One of the collections from Yunnan was identified as *F. concinna* var. *subsessilis* by Corner (1960), with a note "approaching *F. cardiophylla*", a taxon presently reduced to a subspecies of *F. saxophila* Blume (Berg, 2007). This gathering differs from material from eastern China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in a smooth upper surface of the thicker lamina, a difference that might be caused by occurrence at an altitude of c. 1600 m, whereas the other collections are from lower altitudes.

Some specimens from Vietnam were identified as *F. lacor* Buch.-Ham., an erratically applied name, after lectotypification currently included in *F. virens* Aiton (see Berg, 2007).

Corner (1960) included in *F. concinna* var. *subsessilis*, *F. subpedunculata* Miq. (1867a: 217), which is not *F. subpedunculata* Miq. (1867b: 293), included in the synonymy of *F. laevis* Blume (see Berg & Corner, 2005). The former name is linked to the group of predominantly ramiflorous species of sect. *Urostigma*, and in accordance with the description, pointing at early caducous basal bracts and included in *F. concinna*; the type of *F. subpedunculata* could not be traced, and therefore its identity is not quite certain.

Ficus alongensis differs from *F. concinna* in figs which do not occur on spurs on the older wood, but are placed axillary and/or just below the leaves and in the

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Fig. 1. *Ficus alongensis* Gagnep., *Henry 9122* (K), China, Yunnan, 5000 ft.



Fig. 2. *Ficus alongensis* Gagnep., *Steward & H.C. Cheo 1197* (A), China, Guangxi, 200 m.

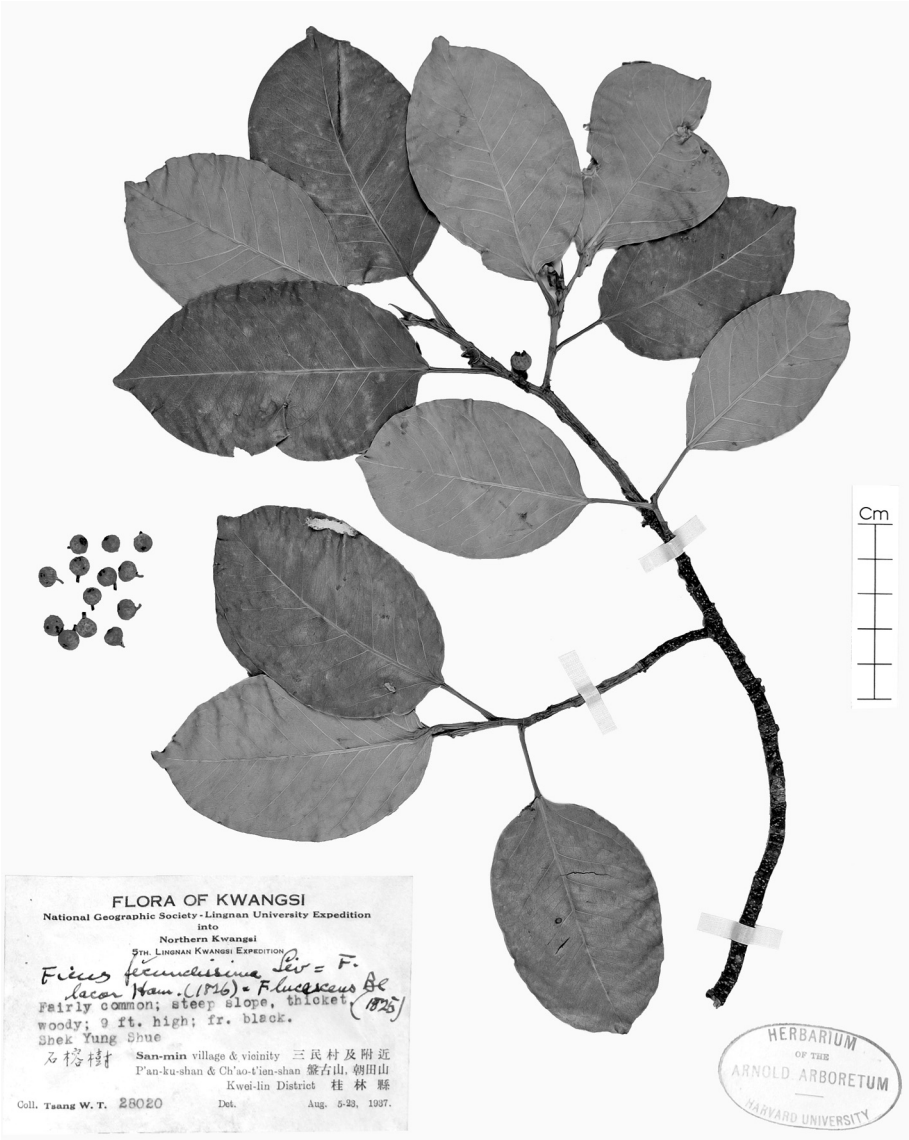


Fig. 3. *Ficus alongensis* Gagnep., *W.T. Tsang 23020* (A), China, Guangxi.

persistent basal bracts. The species is rather variable in the shape of the lamina varying from elliptic to oblong to ovate (see Fig. 1–3). In the ovate lamina, the species shows similarities to *F. saxophila* subsp. *cardiophylla* (Merr.) C.C. Berg (2007), but differs in the more numerous lateral veins and the shorter basal lateral veins.

Ficus alongensis also varies in the length of the peduncle from 0 to 0.4 cm.

This species also shows over-all similarities to two species of subsect. *Conosycea*, *F. benjamina* and *F. microphylla*, which differ from it in the largely whitish ovaries and the disperse staminate flowers, and in the absence of clear indications of intermittent growth.

The material of *F. alongensis* shows intermittent growth, however, with only one or two short internodes marking the previous season's growth from new growth.

The distribution of the species cannot be defined with certainty. Most of the specimens currently included in the species are collected in SE China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Occurrence in Thailand and NE India as stated by Corner (1960) could not yet be confirmed.

Ficus alongensis Gagnep. — Fig. 1–3

Ficus alongensis Gagnep. (1927) 84; (1928) 762. — *Ficus superba* (Miq.) Miq. var. *alongensis* (Gagnep.) Corner (1960) 376. — Type: *Lecomte & Finet 847* (holo P; iso P), Vietnam, 'baie d'Along, île aux Biches', 8 Sept. 1911.

Ficus concinna (Miq.) Miq. var. *subsessilis* Corner (1960) 376. — Type: *Ching 1917* (holo K), China, Zhejiang, Pingyang, 21 June 1924.

Tree up to 12(–30) m tall or shrub, with intermittent growth. Branches brown to blackish. *Leafy twigs* 1.5–4 mm thick, slightly angular to subterete, glabrous; periderm persistent. *Leaves* spirally arranged, coriaceous, oblong to elliptic to (sub)ovate, (2.5–)5–12 by (1–)1.5–5(–6) cm, apex (short-)acuminate (with the acumen obtuse) to obtuse (to rounded or subtruncate), base obtuse to rounded or subcordate, margin entire; upper and lower surface glabrous, smooth; cystoliths only beneath; midrib flat above, lateral veins (5–)6–10 pairs, the basal pair up to 1/5–1/4(–1/3) the length of the lamina, unbranched (or in ovate laminas branched), the other lateral veins furcate away from the margin, tertiary venation largely parallel to the lateral veins to partly reticulate, the reticulum ± prominent and clearly visible above and beneath (or flat); waxy gland at the base of the midrib beneath; petiole 1.2–3(–5) cm long, c. 1 mm thick, widely canaliculate, glabrous, the epidermis persistent; stipules 0.5–1(–3) cm long, glabrous, caducous. *Figs* axillary or also below the leaves on previous season's growth, in pairs or solitary; subsessile or with a peduncle up to 2(–4) mm long, basal bracts 1–2 mm long, persistent; receptacle subglobose to depressed-globose, 0.5–0.7 cm diam. when dry, glabrous, usually ± maculate, colours at maturity unknown, apex of receptacle convex; ostiole c. 1.5 mm diam., ± prominent, closed by glabrous bracts; internal hairs absent. *Staminate flowers* ostiolar. *Tepals* reddish. *Ovary* (dark) red-brown.

Distribution — NE India (?), Thailand (?), China (Zhejian, Jiangxi, Guangxi, Guangdong (incl. Macao), Hongkong, and Yunnan), Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia.

Habitat — Forest at low altitudes, in Yunnan between 1100 and 1600 m.

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