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NOTES ON THE GENUS SABIA (SABIACEAE) FROM VIETNAM

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SUMMARY

Sabia uropetala Gagnep. & Vidal is reduced to *Sabia swinhoei* Hemsl. as a synonym, and the identity of *Embelia bonii* Gagnep., cited in Flora of Vietnam, is clarified.

Key words: Sabiaceae, *Sabia*, Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION

In the course of revising the genus *Embelia* of Indochina, the authors came across a specimen named by F. Gagnepain as *Embelia bonii* (*Bon 2284*) on the herbarium sheet. Although the name was not effectively published, it was accepted by Hô (1991) and Lien (2002) respectively in their Illustrated Flora of Vietnam and Flora of Vietnam. However, the name has not been validated. The plant is a climber, with 5-merous flowers and the stamens as many as and opposite to the corolla-lobes; it is really similar in some respects to *Embelia* of the Myrsinaceae. However, the 2-locular ovary surrounded by a hypogynous disk indicated evidently that it belongs to Sabiaceae, and a further close study reveals that the plant matches *Sabia uropetala* Gagnep. very well in every respect.

Sabia uropetala is known only from the type specimen collected from northern Vietnam on the border area near Guangxi Province of China. In describing this new species, Gagnepain (1952) compared it with *Sabia tomentosa* Hook.f., a species restricted to Myanmar and quite different morphologically and geographically; later it was reduced to *Sabia lanceolata* Colebr. as a synonym by Van de Water (1980). At the same time Van de Water also noticed that *Sabia uropetala* is closely related to *Sabia swinhoei* from the neighbouring country China, but he maintained the species and listed a few trifle differences, e.g. the density of hairs and the length of sepals (1.25–1.75 vs 0.7–1.4). But the distinctions are too slight for recognition of it as a separate species. When more material was examined, the range of indumentum density and the length of sepals, petals and styles found made it impracticable to maintain it as a separate species. Therefore, the following reduction was found to be necessary.

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Sabia swinhoei Hemsl. — Fig. 1; Map 1

Sabia swinhoei Hemsl. (1886) 144; L. Chen (1943) 44; Water (1980) 58; Y.F. Wu (1985) 89. — Type: *Swinhoe s.n.* (holo K), China, Prov. Taiwan.
Sabia uropetala Gagnep. (1952) 271; Gagnep. & Vidal (1960) 13; Water (1980) 58. — Type: *Pételot 6675* (holo P), Vietnam, Prov. Bac Giang.
Embelia bonii Gagnep. in sched; P.H. Hô (1991) 860; T.T.K. Lien (2002) 205, f. 124, nom. inval.

Branchlets slender, laxly to densely pubescent. *Petioles* 3–10(–12) mm long, pubescent. *Leaves* elliptic, ovate-elliptic, oblong-elliptic or narrowly elliptic, sometimes obovate-elliptic, (2–)5–12 by (1–)2–6 cm, base cuneate to rounded, apex acuminate or abruptly and shortly acuminate to acute, adaxial surface glabrous, but ± pubescent on midvein when young, abaxial surface over all laxly or densely pubescent, glabrescent in age; lateral nerves 4–6(–7) on each side of midvein, straight or curved, anastomosing at a distance of 5–8 mm from the margin. *Cymes* axillary, 2–6-flowered, solitary or sometimes arranged in an axillary thyrsoid inflorescence of 1–3 cm long, due to the subtending leaves reduced to bract-like (Fig. 1). *Sepals* ovate to oblong-triangular, 0.7–1.75 by 0.3–1 mm, glabrous to pubescent. *Petals* lanceolate to ovate-lanceolate, (3.5–)4–6 by 0.75–1.4 mm. *Stamens* 1–1.6 mm long; *filaments* ± flattened. *Disk* crown-shaped; lobes distinct. *Ovary* globular to subreniform; *style* 0.3–0.75(–1) mm long. *Drupelets* ± obovoid and compressed, 7–10 by 6–8 mm, blue or dark blue in fresh state.

Distribution — China mainland (Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Hubei, Sichuan, Guizhou, Hunan, Guangdong, Guangxi), Taiwan, and northern Vietnam.

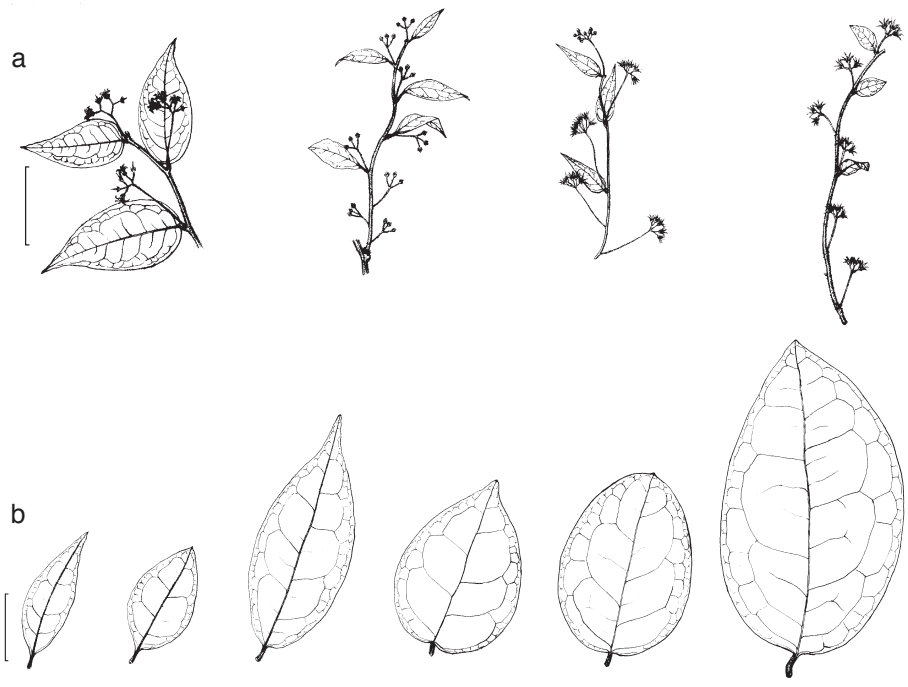
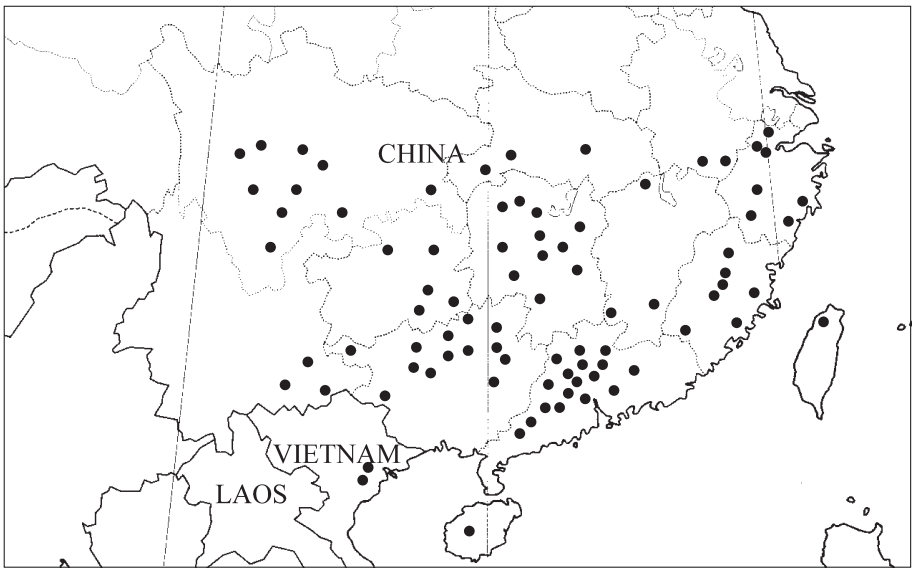


Fig. 1. *Sabia swinhoei* Hemsl. a. Variation of inflorescence; b. variation of leaf shape. Scale bar = 1 cm.



Map 1. Distribution of *Sabia swinhoei* Hemsl.

Habitat & Ecology — Often on shady places in thickets and woods, at altitudes up to 1200 m. Flowering: April to June; fruiting: July to October.

Note — A very variable species, showing variability in many characters (density of indumentum, size and shape of leaves, length of sepals, petals and style).

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