

A tiny taxonomic thorn: *Brevianthus hypocanthidium* and *Aponardia huerlimannii* are one and the same

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Abstract

Brevianthus hypocanthidium and *Aponardia huerlimannii* are found to be synonymous and the new combination *Brevianthus huerlimannii* is made.

Introduction

In a recent paper a distinctive new species of *Brevianthus* was described from New Caledonia on the basis of material collected on Mont Kouakoue by the late Elizabeth Brown (Renner et al. 2015). The fact that a previously published name existed for this plant escaped our attention. The plant we described as *Brevianthus hypocanthidium* M.A.M. Renner & Engel was first recognised as a new species by Váňa and Grolle, who described it under the genus *Nardia* as *N. huerlimannii*, whose type is also from New Caledonia (Váňa 1970). Placement of *N. huerlimannii* within *Nardia* was tentative, neither author of *N. huerlimannii* was particularly happy with its generic placement, though no other genus was then available for what was undoubtedly a distinctive new species. *Nardia* is a member of the Gymnomitriaceae within suborder Jungermanniineae (Shaw et al 2015). *Brevianthus* belongs to the Brevianthaceae, an ally of Lophocoleaceae and Plagiochilaceae within suborder Lophocoleineae (Crandall-Stotler & Stotler 2000). Unfortunately, consideration of potential prior published names for Elizabeth Brown's plant was confined to suborder Lophocoleineae; a search within Gymnomitriaceae was considered unnecessary.

The type species of *Brevianthus* is from Tasmania, and was originally published as *Jackiella flava* Grolle (Grolle 1970). That similarities between the Tasmanian and New Caledonian plants, particularly their distinctive verrucose surface ornamentation, were overlooked is perplexing given that both species were authored or co-authored by Grolle and published in the same year (Grolle 1970, Váňa 1970). *Nardia huerlimannii* was placed in the new monotypic *Nardia* subgenus *Aponardia* R.M.Schust. by Schuster (2002), and though he too missed affinities with *Brevianthus*, he did state "I remain extremely skeptical that this can be retained in *Nardia*..." (Schuster 2002 p 360). *Nardia* subg. *Aponardia* was raised to generic rank, so removing *N. huerlimannii* from *Nardia*, by Váňa et al. (2012). Here we transfer *Aponardia huerlimannii* to *Brevianthus* and provide the new combination. *Aponardia* (R.M.Schust.) Váňa and *Nardia* subgenus *Aponardia* R.M.Schust. follow their type species into synonymy of *Brevianthus* as a result of this transfer.

Nomenclature

Brevianthus J.J.Engel & R.M.Schust., *Phytologia* 47: 317. 1981.

Type: *Brevianthus flavus* (Grolle) J.J.Engel & R.M.Schust., *Phytologia* 47: 318. 1981.

= *Nardia* subg. *Aponardia* R.M.Schust., *Nova Hedwigia Beiheft* 119: 360. 2002, *syn. nov.*

= *Aponardia* (R.M.Schust.) Váňa, *Phytotaxa* 65: 46. 2012, *syn. nov.*

Type: *Nardia huerlimannii* Váňa & Grolle, *Oesterr. Bot. Z.* 118: 233. 1970.

Brevianthus huerlimannii (Váňa & Grolle) M.A.M.Renner & J.J.Engel, *comb. nov.*

= *Aponardia huerlimannii* (Váňa & Grolle) Váňa, *Phytotaxa* 65: 46. 2012.

Basionym: *Nardia huerlimannii* Váňa & Grolle, *Oesterr. Bot. Z.* 118: 233. 1970.

Type: New Caledonia, "... Pic Buse ..., 500 m de la route vers la Montagne des Sources, 580 m," 30 Dec. 1950, Hürlimann 2227 (holotype: Z; isotype: PRC).

= *Brevianthus hypocanthidium* M.A.M.Renner & J.J.Engel, *PhytoKeys* 50: 46. 2015, *syn. nov.*

Type: New Caledonia, Province Sud, Mont Kouakoue, slightly west of base camp at helicopter landing site, without date, *E.A. Brown 2006/17* (holotype: NOU; isotypes: NSW, F).

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