Research note

Correcting the type designation of *Pterocarpus tessmannii* Harms (Leguminosae—Papilionoideae)

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Abstract

A lectotype for *Pterocarpus tessmannii* Harms (Leguminosae—Papilionoideae) is selected and its nomenclature implications are discussed.

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Keywords: Lectotype; Nomenclature; *Pterocarpus tessmannii*; Tropical Africa

*Pterocarpus* Jacq. (Leguminosae—Papilionoideae) is a small pantropical genus of c. 35–40 tree species with a centre of diversity in tropical Africa where about 20 species are endemic (Klitgaard and Lavin, 2005). Harms (1910: 311) described a new species, *Pterocarpus tessmannii* based on a specimen collected by Tessmann ["Hinterland von Spanisch-Guinea (G. Tessmann n.B. 253. — März 1908)]. Günther Tessmann was a German botanist who collected plants in Equatorial Guinea between 1904 and 1910, both in Bioko and Río Muni (Aedo and Velayos, 2001); he also collected plants in Cameroon. The top set of his collections were housed in Berlin (B) but most of them were destroyed during World War II. Fortunately some duplicates of his collections from West Central Africa are to be found in herbaria HBG, K and P.

Rojo (1972: 100), in a revision of the genus *Pterocarpus* for the World excluded *P. tessmannii*, because: “The calyx base is thickened, which is not a character of *Pterocarpus*. Moreover, there are two ovaries in a flower. The true identity is not clear”, and further commented that “Le Testu 7466 agrees very well with the type”. Evrard (1988) studied *Le Testu 7466* (BM, BR, P) and other specimens from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Gabon, and concluded that *P. tessmannii* was a valid species of *Pterocarpus* which should be reinstated. Neither Rojo nor Evrard found a duplicate of the original specimen used by Harms to describe the species, so Evrard selected *Le Testu 7466* as a neotype (Gabon. Haut-Ogooué, 29-IX-1929, *Le Testu 7466*).

Following the ICBN (McNeill et al., 2006): “A neotype is a specimen or illustration selected to serve as nomenclatural type if no original material is extant, or as long as it is missing” (Art. 9.6) and “The author who first designates a lectotype or a neotype must be followed, but that choice is superseded if (a) the holotype or, in the case of a neotype, any of the original material is rediscovered...” (Art. 9.17.a).

During a study visit in K working on the Equatorial Guinea Flora project, a duplicate specimen of *Tessmann 253* was found erroneously laid away in a Gabon folder. It is concluded that the type designation of *Pterocarpus tessmannii* Harms should therefore be corrected to: Equatorial Guinea. Wele Nzás: Nkolentangan, 4-III-1908, *Tessmann 253* (holotype, B†; lectotype, K!; chosen here) (Art. 9.9; Art. 9.10).

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References


