

PALM BRIEF

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A New Species of *Wettinia* (Palmae) from Ecuador*

Specimen material with sections of a leaf and an infructescence together with notes and photographs was recently received from the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. Although neither staminate nor pistillate flowers are available, the immature fruits are so distinctive that they can be contrasted with those of other species in the subgenus *Wettiniicarpus* to which it belongs. A description is provided here to alert collectors in the hope that a complete series of specimens may ultimately be obtained and to point out differences from another (and perhaps even a third) species that occurs in the general region of Maldonado on the western slopes of the Andes toward the Colombian border.



1. Habit of *W. verruculosa*. Photo by Michael Madison.

Wettinia (*Wettiniicarpus*) **verruculosa** H. E. Moore, **sp. nov.** (Fig. 1-3).

W. castaneae affinis sed in fructu verruculoso vice spinoso.

Trunk solitary, 3-4 m high, 15 cm in diam., gray-brown, smooth, with internodes to 20 cm long and prominent stilt roots.

Leaves ca. 6, arching-spreading; sheath bright green, ca. 1.2 m long; petiole 25 cm long; rachis 2.5 m long, appressed-pilose beneath; pinnae undivided, praemorse, (20-) 36 on each side of the rachis and drooping in a single plane, middle pinnae ca. 1.1 m long, 8.5 cm wide, densely and minutely hairy beneath.

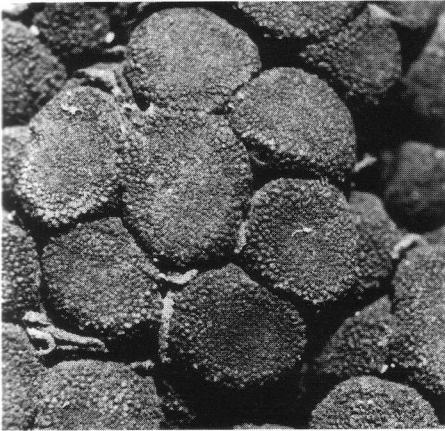
Inflorescences solitary at the node, in fruit ellipsoid, ca. 23 cm long, 12 cm wide exclusive of curved peduncle; upper peduncular bracts ca. 32 cm long, 11.5 cm wide, minutely hairy or glabrescent, rostrate; rachillae ca. 2 cm long, with 7-12 fruits exposed at tip.

Immature fruits 1- or often 2-seed-



2. Infructescences of *W. verruculosa*. Photo by Michael Madison.

* This paper was completed by Dr. Moore during the summer of 1980.



3. Details of fruits. Photo by Howard Lyon.

ed, 1–1.5 cm long, angled by mutual pressure and variously shaped but broadest and essentially truncate at the apex, softly brown-hairy and verruculose; fruiting perianth minutely hairy; sepals triangular, ca. 7.5 mm long, 3–4 mm wide; petals triangular, ca. 1 cm long, 6 mm wide.

ECUADOR: Prov. Carchi; in open pasture between Chical and Maldonado, 1,350 m, 4 Dec. 1979, *M. T. Madison & L. Besse* 7290 (BH, holotype; SEL, isotype).

Wettinia verruculosa takes its epithet from the distinctive minutely warty surface of the fruit, which additionally is softly hairy. It may be contrasted with species currently included in subgenus *Wettiniicarpus* (Moore and Dransfield 1978) as follows:

1. Pinnae undivided.
2. Fruit covered with indurate, straight or uncinat, brown, spinose trichomes. Colombia. -----
W. castanea
2. Fruit covered with short soft hairs and small, wartlike protuberances. Ecuador. -----
W. verruculosa

1. Pinnae longitudinally divided into numerous sections on mature individuals. Colombia. -----
(W. cladospadix, W. fascicularis)

A further species of this alliance from Colombia (Galeano-Gardés and Bernal-González in manuscript) differs in having fruits that are less closely packed in the infructescence and attenuate distally into an acute apex. Perhaps still another is represented by preserved staminate and pistillate inflorescences presumably from the Maldonado region of Ecuador but without foliage and associated with a collection of *W. quinaria* (see below).

There is, in addition, a second species of *Wettinia* that occurs in the same general region as *W. verruculosa* but apparently mostly at somewhat lower elevations. *Wettinia quinaria* (Cook & Doyle) Burret, known locally as *gualte*, has similar leaves with undivided pinnae but is readily distinguished by the structure of both staminate and pistillate inflorescences that have few (4–5) elongate axes and usually several inflorescences at a node (cf. Moore and Dransfield 1978, *pl.* 4). It is represented by *Madison & Besse* 7285 from a pasture left in wet montane forest at El Pailon, ca. 45 km below Maldonado along a footpath to Tobar Donosa, 800 m elevation; and apparently also by *Madison, Plowman, Kennedy, & Besse* 4708 from Peñas Blancas, 20 km below Maldonado where also left in a pasture at 1,100 m. I have seen only photographs of the last. *Wettinia quinaria* seems also to have stems that attain a greater height of 10–15 m.

LITERATURE CITED

- MOORE, H. E., JR. AND J. DRANSFIELD. 1978. A new species of *Wettinia* and notes on the genus. Notes from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh 36: 259–267, pl. 2–4.