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## A taxonomic revision of Antillean *Symplocos* (Symplocaceae)

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## Table of content

Abstract.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Prior taxonomic work on Antillean <i>Symplocos</i> .....	4
Geographic distribution, endemism, and ecology.....	5
Material and methods.....	7
Systematic treatment of Antillean <i>Symplocos</i> .....	9
Acknowledgments.....	62
References.....	62
Appendix I. Numerical list of Antillean <i>Symplocos</i> species recognized in the present revision and their occurrence in higher-level categories.....	66
Appendix II. Index to exsiccatae.....	66

## Abstract

We present a taxonomic revision of *Symplocos* (Symplocaceae, Ericales, Angiospermae) for the Antilles. The seventeen species recognized are distributed among three major clades of the genus corresponding to *S.* sect. *Hopea*, *S.* ser. *Symplocos*, and *S.* ser. *Urbaniocharis*, the latter two comprising *S.* sect. *Symplocos*. Fifteen of the species are endemic to the Antilles and only one (*S. cubensis*) occurs in more than one major island group. The revision includes keys, descriptions, distribution maps, and a conservation assessment for each species. ***Symplocos baracoensis*** is described as new, and lectotypes are designated for ***S. apiculata***, ***S. domingensis***, ***S. guadeloupensis***, ***S. harrisii***, ***S. hyboneura***, ***S. jamaicensis***, ***S. jurgensenii***, ***S. lanata***, ***S. latifolia***, ***S. micrantha***, ***S. pilifera***, ***S. polyantha***, ***S. tubulifera***, and ***S. urbaniana***.

**Key words:** Caribbean, lectotype, new species

## Introduction

*Symplocos* Jacquin (1760: 24) comprises ca. 340 species of woody, mostly evergreen flowering plants distributed in the Americas and the lands bordering the western Pacific Rim (Nooteboom 1975, Fritsch *et al.* 2008). The genus is found primarily in humid tropical montane forests, but several species extend into the north-temperate zone. The infrafamilial classification of the Symplocaceae was recently revised in accordance with strict monophyly on the basis of phylogenetic data from morphology and DNA sequences (Fritsch *et al.* 2008). Two genera are recognized, i.e., the strictly Asian *Cordyloblaste* Henschel ex Moritz (1848: 606), and *Symplocos*; the latter is divided into two subgenera [*Palura* G.Don (1837: 3 and *Symplocos*], three sections within *S.* subg. *Symplocos* [*Hopea* Linnaeus (1767: 105) Candolle (1844: 253), *Lodhra* G.Don (1837: 2), and *Symplocos*], and two series within *S.* sect. *Symplocos* [*Symplocos* and *Urbaniocharis* (Brand) P.W.Fritsch in Fritsch *et al.* (2008); Fritsch *et al.* 2008; Table 1].

A number of taxonomic studies conducted since 1990 have updated the family-wide species-level taxonomy of Brand (1901). These studies encompass all species in most of Andean South America (Ståhl 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995b, 1996, 2010a, 2010b), the Venezuelan Guayana (Steyermark & Berry 2005), central French Guiana (Mori & Brown 2002), Mexico and Mesoamerica (Kelly & Almeda 2009, Kelly *et al.* in preparation), and the United States (Almeda & Fritsch, 2009), as well as the species in *S.* sect. *Hopea* in South America (Aranha Filho 2011, Aranha Filho *et al.* 2012) and those of *S.* sect. *Symplocos* in part (the “Neosymplocos group”, endemic to South America; Aranha Filho *et al.* 2007, 2009). The major areas still remaining to be covered with detailed taxonomic treatments of New World *Symplocos* are non-Guayan Venezuela [a treatment of Venezuelan species (Aristeguieta 1957) appears to be outdated], most of the Guianas, the Brazilian members of *S.* ser. *Symplocos*, and the Antilles.

In terms of biogeography and endemism, the Antilles may represent the most significant gap in taxonomic knowledge of the genus. The region, here defined as the islands of the Caribbean from Cuba through Puerto Rico (the Greater Antilles) south through Grenada (the Lesser Antilles) and excluding the Bahamas and the islands off the north coast of Venezuela (the latter of which are sometimes included in the Lesser Antilles), is poised between the two large continental landmasses of North America and South America. Its tropical climate and complex geology have resulted in both high biotic diversity and high endemism, with many plant species endemic to

1922, *Ekman 14688* (F!, NY [2]!, S!, US!); Sierra Maestra, lower N slopes of main ridge above Río Yao, 300–1000 m, [20°04'N, 76°39'W], 27–28 October 1941, *Morton & Acuña Galé 3464* (F!, HAC!, MO!, NY!, US!). **Isla de la Juventad:** Nueva Gerona, Sierra la Cañada, 300 m, [21°45'N, 82°57'W], 1 April 1967, *Bisse 1586* (JE!); unspecified, *Blain 137* (F!); vicinity of Los Indios, [21°42'N, 83°0'W], 13 February 1916, *Britton et al. 14237* (F!, GH!, MO!, NY!, S!, US!); [Cerros de] San Juan, [21°41'N, 82°40'W], 15, 17 March 1916, *Britton et al. 15002* (F!, GH!, NY!, US!); near Nueva Gerona, [21°53'N, 82°48'W], 23 February 1904, *Curtiss 365* (F!, GH!, NY!, US!); Nueva Gerona towards [Loma] Bibijagua, [21°53'N, 82°44'W], 6 December 1920, *Ekman 12527* (S!); between Mina de Oro and Playa del Soldado, [21°45'13"N, 83°02'11"W], 6 April 1954, *Killip 43871* (F!, GH!, NY!, US!); along rd to San Francisco de las Piedras, [21°47'N, 82°50'W], 23 February 1955, *Killip 44878* (US!). **Pinar del Río:** Herradura, [22°34'25"N, 83°27'09"W], 13 April 1920, *Ekman 10801* (F!, S!, US!), 22 June 1922, *Ekman 14100* (S!); Km 13 of the high rd to La Coloma S of Pinar del Río city, [22°20'N, 83°40'W], 30 November 1923, *Ekman 18240* (NY!, S!). **Sancti Spiritus:** Banao, Arroyo Agabama Valley, N of the town, [21°51'N, 79°35'W], 15 November 1975, *Areces-Mallea et al. 28683* (B [image 10 0415530]!, JE!); Mpio. Fomento, Alturas de Sancti Spíritus, valle de Arroyo Gavilancito, 300–400 m, 10 November 1979, *Bisse et al. HFC 41083* (B [image 10 0364099]!); Banao Mtns. [Lomas de Banao], summit of Loma [Lomas] de la Gloria, 950 m, [21°58'37"N, 79°39'47"W], 30 July 1918, *León & Roca 7987* (HAC!, NY!); La Güira Mtn., Tope[s] de Collantes, [21°49'30"N, 79°38'19"W], 19 July 1957, *Liogier 6476* (GH!, HAC!, US!); Lomas de Banao, [21°51'42"N, 79°35'35"W], 9 January 1920, *Luna 19* (NY!). **Villa Clara:** Trinidad Mtns., [Valle de la] Sigüanea, 400 m, [22°03'N, 80°04'W], 2–5 March 1910, *Britton & Wilson 4970* (F!, NY [2]!).

## Excluded name

*Symplocos glabra* Euphrasén (1798: 224).

The main part of Euphrasén's collections is reportedly in the Thunberg Herbarium at UPS, with a small portion at S (Stafleu and Cowan, 1976). Like Howard (1988), we were not able to locate type material. Howard (1988) considered it possible that this is conspecific with *Symplocos martinicensis* by the single-flowered axillary peduncles. Although the racemes of *S. martinicensis* can be single-flowered, usually there are several flowers. The glabrous leaves, however, differ from the leaves of *S. martinicensis*, which are at least sparsely strigillose to pilosulose proximally on the midvein of the abaxial surface.

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