

Novitates Gabonenses 51. A new *Clerodendrum* (Lamiaceae, formerly Verbenaceae) from Gabon

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KEY WORDS

Lamiaceae,
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ABSTRACT

Clerodendrum leucobotrys from Gabon is described and illustrated. Its affinities are discussed. The new species is characterized by its pendulous inflorescences with long white hairs bearing small flowers with yellow corolla and glandular-hairy tube.

RÉSUMÉ

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MOTS CLÉS

Lamiaceae,
Verbenaceae,
Clerodendrum,
Gabon,
nouvelle espèce.

Clerodendrum leucobotrys du Gabon est décrit et illustré. Ses affinités sont discutées. L'espèce est caractérisée par son inflorescence pendante à longs poils blancs, avec des petites fleurs à corolle jaune avec des poils glanduleux sur son tube.

INTRODUCTION

Clerodendrum L. is a genus of about 400 species of trees, shrubs, lianas, or occasionally perennial herbs, mostly in the tropics and subtropics of the Old World (VERDCOURT 1992). The number of species in Africa is uncertain, THOMAS (1936) listed 150. Since then some of his species have been reduced to taxa of lower rank or placed in synonymy (VERDCOURT 1992), but new species have been added as well (VERDCOURT 1992; FERNANDES 1998), so the

total number of species may still be around 150. The *Flora of West Tropical Africa* (HUBER 1963) lists 30 species and the *Flora of Tropical East Africa* (VERDCOURT 1992) 53 species. There are no recent taxonomic treatments of the genus for Central Africa. The checklist of Gabon (SOSEF *et al.* in press) records 19 species only. From these figures it might be concluded that *Clerodendrum* is better represented in the drier parts of tropical Africa than in the rain forest. The new species described here is found in the evergreen rain forest in NW Gabon.

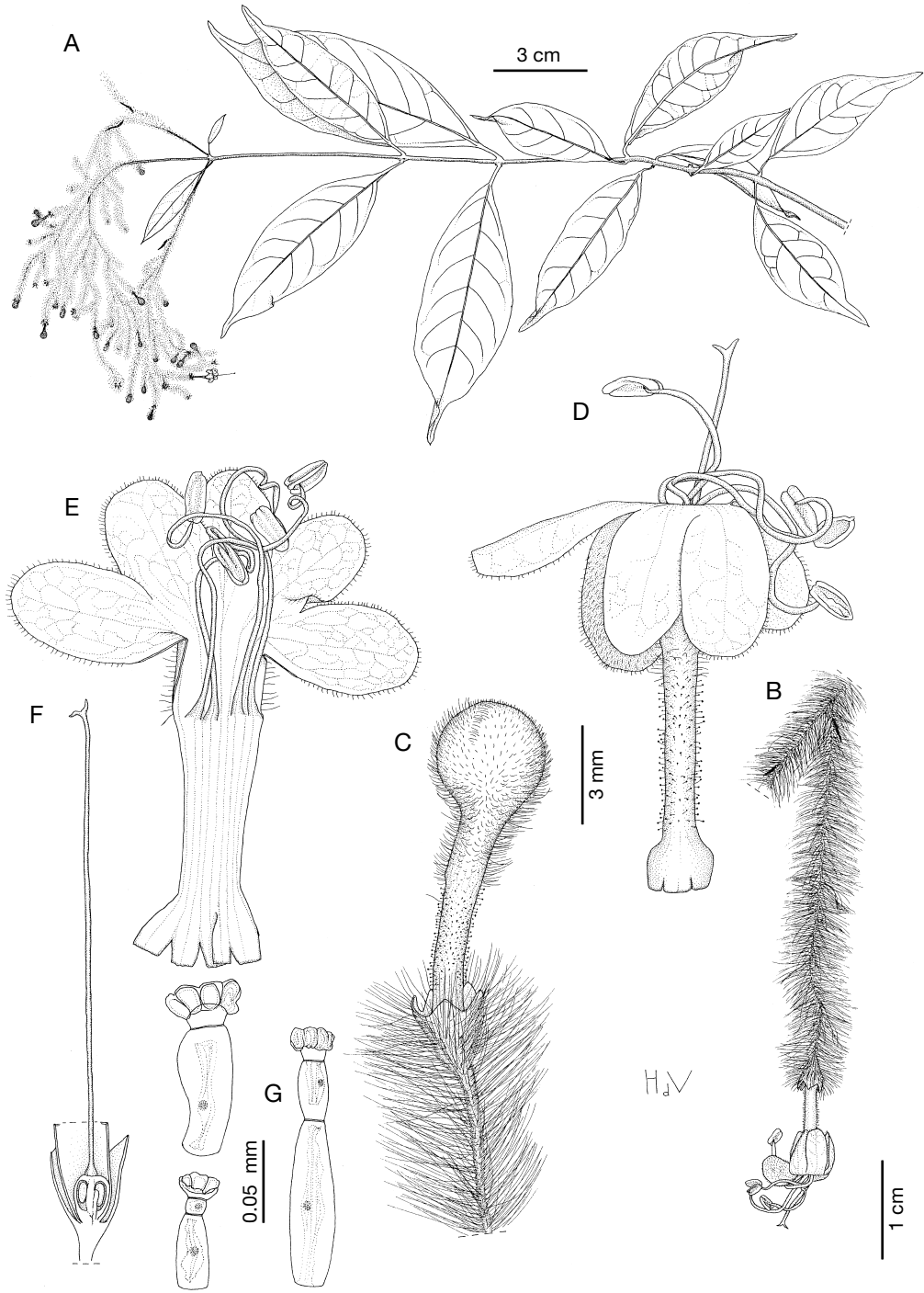


FIG. 1. — *Clerodendrum leucobotrys* Breteler: A, flowering branch; B, flower; C, flower-bud; D, corolla; E, corolla opened out; F, pistil with ovary cut lengthwise; G, glandular hairs of corolla tube. Breteler 15827. Drawing by H. DE VRIES.

***Clerodendrum leucobotrys* Breteler, sp.nov.**

Clerodendri formicarum Guerke *maxime simile forma staturaque folii, statura floris et corolla actinomorpha, ab eo differt inflorescentiis pendulis conspicue confertim albidis pilosis, floribus pendulis flavis et tubo corollae glanduloso.*

TYPUS. — *Breteler 15827*, Gabon, N of Babylone forestry camp, 0°38'N, 11°E, fl. July 2002 (holo-, WAG; iso-, BR, COI, G, K, LBV, MA, MO, P, PRE).

Lianescent shrub *c.* 1 m tall; branchlets sparsely pilose, probably becoming hollow. Leaves opposite; petiole subterete, channelled above, 4–11 mm long, articulated at ≤ 4 mm from base, glabrous or very sparsely pilose; lamina papery, glabrous, minutely dark-green to black-dotted beneath, narrowly elliptic, *c.* 3 times as long as wide, (5-)7–11 \times (1.5-)2.5–3.5 cm, cuneate to slightly rounded at base, acuminate at the apex, the acumen acute, 0.5–1.5 cm long; midrib and the 6–8 pairs of main lateral nerves plane to impressed above, prominent beneath. Inflorescences (sub)terminal, cymose, pendulous, densely villous, the hairs \pm flat (*in sicco*), multicellular, 2–5 mm long; peduncle 1.5–2.5 cm long; bracts and bracteoles linear-oblongate, up to 6 mm long. Flowers pendulous; pedicel 2–4 cm long, villous; calyx \pm campanulate, 5-lobed, 2–3 mm long, sparsely villous; tube 1.5–2 mm long; lobes suberect, triangular, ≤ 1 mm long; corolla \pm regular, yellow; tube 9–11 mm long, *c.* 1 mm wide, distinctly widened in lowest 1–1.5 mm, slightly so in upper part above attachment of stamens, glabrous in basal part, glandular-pubescent in the middle part, villous on upper part, glabrous inside; lobes spreading to reflexed, oblong-elliptic, 3–3.5 \times 2–2.5 mm, villous outside, glabrous inside; stamens attached on tube at *c.* 3 mm from mouth, up to 10 mm long, long-exserted, glabrous; anthers 1.5 mm long; pistil *c.* 15 mm long, glabrous; ovary subglobose, 1 mm long, smooth. Fruits and seeds unknown. — Fig. 1.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION. — Rain forest in NW Gabon. Only once collected at an altitude of *c.* 200 m.

DISCUSSION. — Describing a new species from Gabon in the large genus *Clerodendrum* is not

easy, the more so as a taxonomic treatment of the Central African species has not been undertaken since THOMAS's revision (1936), dealing with all the African species. In this revision very little material from Gabon has been cited, although the rich collections made by *Klaine* and *Le Testu* were available in the Paris herbarium. This herbarium was not visited by THOMAS nor was any material borrowed from it. Identification of *Breteler 15827* with the key to the species in THOMAS's revision did not lead to a satisfactory result. The same holds for trying to identify the specimen with the *Flora of West Tropical Africa* and the *Flora of Tropical East Africa*. A thorough search at the herbaria of Paris and Wageningen, where the best collections from Gabon are located, did not reveal any species that fitted *Breteler 15827*, or any material that matched this collection. Only *C. formicarum* Gürke shows \pm similar leaves and flowers, but is clearly distinguished from *C. leucobotrys* by the latter's densely white-hairy inflorescences with pendulous flowers. With the new species *C. leucobotrys* the number of species from Gabon reaches 20.

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