Summary: The genus *Borthwickia* W. W. Sm. (*Resedaceae*) is a monotypic genus, with *B. trifoliata* W. W. Sm. This species has been known only from Myanmar, China (Yunnan) and Vietnam. During the expedition in Phongsali Province, Lao PDR, a population of this species was found and the specimens were collected. A brief note on its morphology and ecology are provided with photographs.

Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR) is located at the center of Indochinese peninsula. Lao PDR’s area is about 230,000 km² of which about 80% is covered by forest (Dwyer and Ingalls 2015). The country also possesses a great range of altitude and latitude, so it could be a home of diverse flowering plants. However, the flora of Lao PDR is one of the least known in Asia because of the lack of the collection and research (Newman et al. 2007).

*Borthwickia* W. W. Sm. is a monotypic genus, the sole species being, *B. trifoliata* W. W. Sm. It was first described by Smith (1911) based on a specimen collected from Myanmar. This genus as formerly treated as a member of *Capparaceae* (Smith 1911). Later, it was treated as a genus in monotypic family, *Borthwickiaceae* (Su et al. 2012). Now it is considered as a member of *Resedaceae* in APG IV (APG 2016). The genus *Borthwickia* was reported from Myanmar and China (Sun 1999), and recently from Vietnam (Cuong et al. 2008).

During a botanical expedition in Phongsali Province, Lao PDR in May and September 2018, the specimens of a plant, formerly identified as *Capparaceae*, were collected. The specimens were deposited in the herbarium of Queen Sirikit Botanic Garden (QBG) and lately identified as *B. trifoliata* which is a new genus record for the flora of Lao PDR. The description based on Laos specimens and photographs are provided below.

**Taxonomic treatment**


Shrub, 2–3 m tall. Branches drying to yellow or yellow green, with dense short white pubescence, glabrescent later. Leaves opposite, ternately compound; petiole 2.5–6.5 cm; petiolules short ca. 1–3 mm; leaflet membranous, glabrous adaxially, with white short pubescence on abaxial veins; secondary veins 6–8 on each side; terminal leaflet elliptic, lanceolate, oblanceolate, 10–17 × 5–7 cm, base cuneate or attenuate, margin entire, apex acuminate; lateral leaflets ovate–lanceolate, slightly smaller than the terminal one; tertiary veins reticulated. Inflorescences terminal racemes, 9–12 cm long, with dense white short pubescence along axis; bracts deciduous. Flower bud citrine to ivory-colored, fusiform, 10 × 8 mm. Pedicels 0.9–1 cm long, pubescent. Sepals 2–4, ca. 1 cm long, white pubescent on both sides, connate, forming a tube. Petals white, 4–6, 1.1–1.5 cm long, oblong to spatulate, ± equal, 1/3–1/2 as
long as calyx tube, glabrous, margin ciliate. Androgynophore ca. 5 mm long; stamens > 50. Nectary conical, surrounding androgynophore. Ovary linear, ca. 2 cm long, stigma undivided, ovules many. Capsule moniliform, terete, 5–8 cm x 5–6 mm, base attenuate, beak 2–4 mm long. Seeds reniform, many.


Note: The numbers of sepals and petals are less than the observation in Su et al. (2012). In their revision, the numbers of both sepals and petals are described to be 5–8. In our specimens the numbers of sepals and petals are 2–4 and 4–6, respectively.

Distribution: China (Yunnan), Laos (Phongsali), Myanmar (Shan [Type]), Vietnam (Lào Cai).

Ecology: Wet area, close to river; 350 m above sea level.

References


