

The Taxonomic Position of *Desmodium auricomum* Benth. (Leguminosae-Papilionoideae) and Its New Variety

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Desmodium auricomum was considered to be nearest to *D. microphyllum*, but its close relationship to *D. heterophyllum* becomes also clear. It is newly found in India where is the westernmost area of its distribution. A form lacking a longitudinal band of hairs on the lateral side of pods is described as a new variety of the species, i.e., var. *pseudoauricomum* Ohashi.

Desmodium auricomum Benth. appeared for the first time in Wallich's Catalogue (1831–32) as "5704. *Desmodium auricomum* Grah. Tavoy W.G." Bentham (1852) gave the description for this species and placed it in a group Polycarpa of the section Nicolsonia. Gagnepain (1916) in the key to the species for Flora gén. Indo-Chine (on page 565) put the species near *D. microphyllum* (Thunb. ex Murray) DC. which was treated as a member of the section Sagotia by Bentham (1852). Ohashi (1973) classified *D. auricomum* as a member of the section Sagotia and mentioned its similarity to *D. microphyllum*. Nicolsonia and Sagotia are closely related sections within the subgenus Sagotia, but distinguished by the calyx and inflorescence. Sagotia has 5-lobed calyx and lax-flowered pseudoracemes, while Nicolsonia has 4-lobed calyx and densely flowered pseudoracemes (Ohashi 1973).

Desmodium auricomum is characteristic by its pods with a longitudinal band of hairs on the lateral side and inflorescences with conspicuous spreading yellowish hairs. In addition to these specific characteristics, it has lax-flowered inflorescences, small

leaflets, and deeply bifide upper calyx-lobes (i.e., the 5-lobed calyx), which are characteristic features of the section Sagotia distinguishing it from the section Nicolsonia.

Desmodium auricomum is common with *D. microphyllum* in having small, thin chartaceous, narrowly obovate-elliptic terminal leaflets, slender pedicels, terminal inflorescences, slender calyx-teeth of which the upper one deeply divided into 2 teeth, and both indehiscent and dehiscent pods. However, the latter differs from the former in having the arillate seeds, uniformly uncinata hairs (or rarely glabrous) on the pods which are constricted from both sutures and the obovate vexillum. *D. auricomum* is, also, very similar to *D. heterophyllum* in having heterophyllous leaves, i.e., 1- and 3-foliolate leaves, heteromorphous terminal leaflets, terminal inflorescences seemingly opposite to leaves by sympodial branching, long slender pedicels, and both indehiscent and dehiscent pods. But, *D. heterophyllum* differs from *D. auricomum* in having broadly obovate vexillum, larger pods without a longitudinal band of hairs on lateral sides, seeds with the larger hilum and spreading hairy

stems.

Desmodium auricomum seems to be closely related to both *D. heterophyllum* and *D. microphyllum*, though it was considered only to the latter (Gagnepain 1920, Ohashi 1973), and these three species seem to be one of the most advanced species groups

of *Desmodium*.

Desmodium auricomum is unique among the species of the genus in having a longitudinal band of hairs on the lateral side of pods. However, I found two specimens of *D. auricomum* without the band of hairs on the lateral sides of pods in Cambodia and Vietnam.

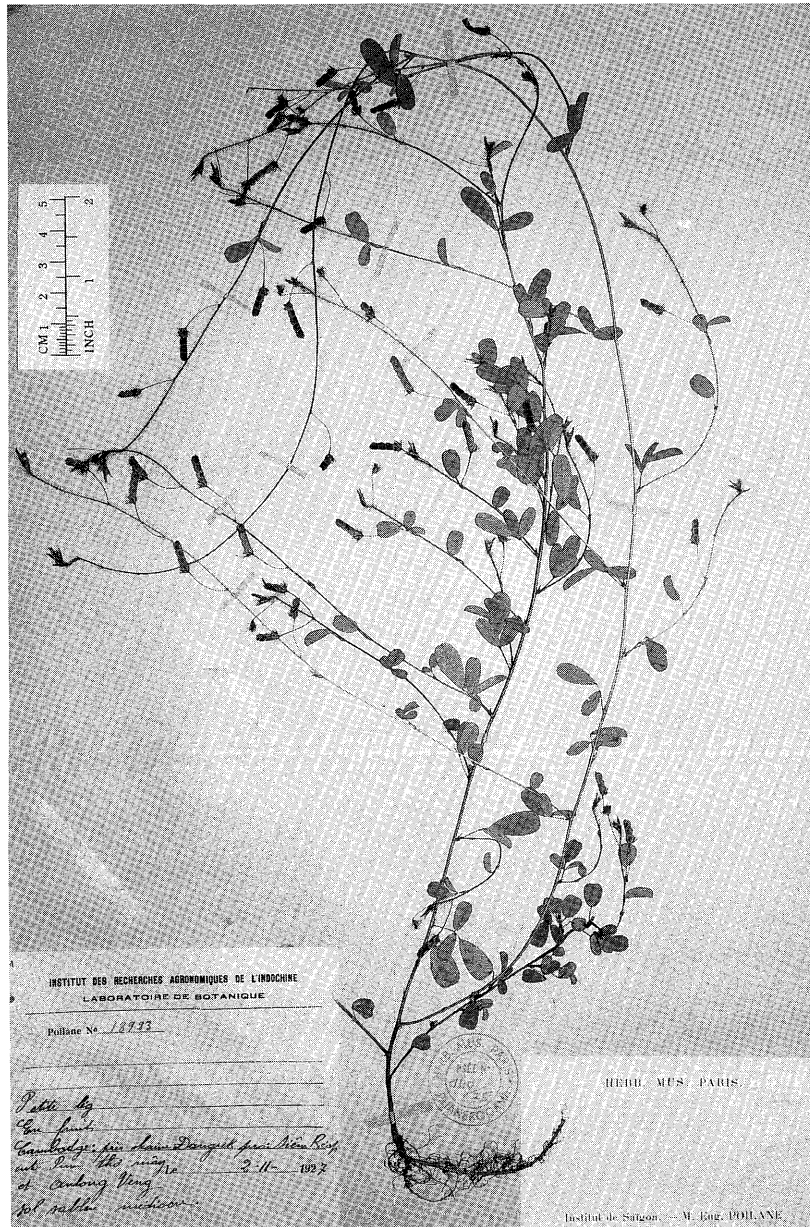


Fig. 1. *Desmodium auricomum* var. *pseudoauricomum* H. Ohashi (Poilane 13923, Holotype in P).

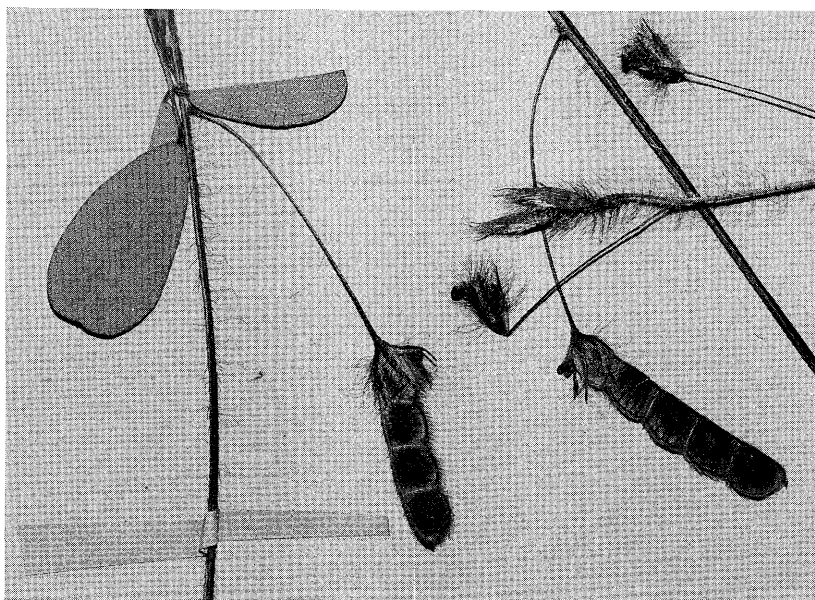


Fig. 2. A part of the holotype showing and a terminal flower pods, $\times 2.7$.

I think such a form is proper to treat to be a new variety.

Desmodium auricomum is previously known from SE. Asia, but I found a specimen of this species from India. That is Helfer 95 (A) collected at a suburb of Calcutta in W. Bengal. This is the new record of the species from India where is the westernmost area of its distribution.

Desmodium auricomum Grah. [Wallich, Cat. no. 5704 (1831–32), nom. nud.] ex Bentham in Miq., Pl. Jungh. 223 (1852), in adnota; Baker in Hook. f., Fl. Brit. Ind. 2: 172 (1876); Gagnep., Fl. Gen. Indoch. 2: 596 (1920); Craib, Fl. Siam. Enum. 1: 403 (1928); van Meeuwen in Reinwardtia 6: 246 (1962); Backer et Bakh. f., Fl. Java 1: 607 (1963); Ohashi in Ginkgoana 1: 234 (1973).

Type. Burma: Tavoy, Tenasserim (W. Gomez in Wallich 5705 K-lecto & isolecto, K-W-isolecto).

Distribution: India, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Java and Madura Island.

Habitat: In open sandy grounds, grassy places or wet pastures.

Key to the varieties

1. Pods pubescent with a longitudinal, ± 1 mm wide, band of dense appressed rigid hairs (up to 1 mm long) on lateral surfaces var. *auricomum*
1. Pods without the hairs as above
..... var. *pseudoauricomum*

Desmodium auricomum var. ***pseudoauricomum***
H. Ohashi, var. nov.

A typo legumen pilis vittatis destitutum differt.

Hab.: Cambodge. Prov. Siem Reap (Poilane 13923, P-holotypus, photo TUS & A); prov. Battambang & Siem Reap (Poilane 14415 P). Vietnam (Schmid 11161 a part, P).

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大橋広好：ヌスビトハギ属 *Desmodium auricomum* の分類

マメ科ヌスビトハギ属の一種、*Desmodium auricomum* は東南アジアに分布することが知られていたが、今回インドからも発見された。この種は

これまで *D. microphyllum* に近いと考えられていたが (Ohashi 1973), *D. heterophyllum* (カワリバマキエハギ) にも非常に近縁であることが明らかになった。またカンボジアからこの種の一変種を記載した。