The Taxonomic Position of Desmodium hispidum Franch. (Leguminosae)

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Desmodium hispidum Franch. described in 1890 was changed by Schindler to the genus Uraria in 1926, i.e., Uraria hispida (Franch.) Schindl. We consider that this species belongs to Desmodium and is close to D. laxiflorum DC. and D. diffusum DC. Distinction among these species is clarified. The lectotype of Uraria henryi Schindl., a synonym of D. hispidum, is designated.

Key words: Desmodium hispidum, Leguminosae, taxonomy, Uraria henryi, Uraria hispida.

Desmodium hispidum Franch. was described by Franchet in 1890 on the basis of Delavay 3504 in P which was collected in Heqing, Yunnan, in 1888. The species was characterized by its pods which are plicate or straight. The feature is similar to the plicate pods of Uraria, and therefore Schindler (1926) transferred it to the genus, i.e., Uraria hispida (Franch.) Schindl. Since then the species have been kept in Uraria. The species has, however, 2–8 flowers per node of the inflorescence, 4-lobed calyx, deflexed pedicels after flowering, and either plicate or straight pods. In Uraria, however, species generally have 2 flowers per node of the inflorescence, 5-lobed calyx, incurved pedicels after flowering, and either plicate or straight pods. In Uraria, however, species generally have 2 flowers per node of the inflorescence, 5-lobed calyx, incurved pedicels after flowering, and always plicate fruits. Therefore, we think Uraria hispida belongs to Desmodium. The character of plicate pods can be find also in Desmodium styracifolium (Osbeck.) Merr.

Desmodium hispidum has sometimes been confused with Desmodium diffusum DC. and D. laxiflorum DC. (Ohashi 1973, Yang and Huang 1981). These three species are very similar to each other, but they differ as follows:
1. Pods always straight; pedicels not deflexed after flowering; flowers opening one by one; articles linear to narrowly oblong; leaves 3- or 3-1-foliolate
2. Pods striate-veined on lateral surfaces, vertically jointed, both sutures almost straight at nodes; hilum about 0.3 mm long; terminal leaflet with lateral veins 8–11 pairs, acute at apex, erect or ascending shrubs or subshrubs
3. Pods smooth to more or less rough on lateral surfaces, obliquely jointed, both sutures constricted at nodes; hilum about 0.15 mm long; terminal leaflet with lateral veins 5–8 pairs, obtuse or acute at apex, prostrate or ascending herbs or subshrubs

1. Pods plicate or straight; pedicels deflexed after flowering; flowers opening almost at the same time; articles oblong; leaves al-
Fig. 1. *Desmodium hispidum* Franch.  

a. Flowering branch, some inflorescences are removed from the lowest node; 
b. Flower (×ca. 6);  
c. Standard (×ca. 6);  
d. Wing (×ca. 6);  
e. Keel-petal (×ca. 6);  
f. Pistil (×ca. 6);  
g. Young loment (×ca. 2). Drawing by X. F. Gao.
ways 3-foliolate .................. *D. hispidum*

**Desmodium hispidum** Franch., Pl. Delav. 174 (1890).


An erect shrub or subshrub, 0.5–1 m tall. Stems striate; branches densely yellowish villose, old branches purple, glabrous. Leaves 3-foliolate. Stipules 10–15 mm long, 3–4 mm wide, ovate or narrowly triangular-

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**Fig. 2.** *Desmodium hispidum* Franch. a. Inflorescence showing more than 2 flowers per node. Voucher specimens: Kindg-Ward 22592 (BM); b. Infructescence showing deflexed pedicels, plicate or straight lornents, and base of seven inflorescences arising from a node. Voucher specimens: Heny 9342B (A).
ovate. Petioles 1–2 cm long, densely yellowish villose; petiolules 4–6 mm long. Leaflets chartaceous, terminal leaflets 5–17 cm long, 3–8 cm wide, ovate to elliptic, upper surface densely hispid, glabrescent, lower surface yellowish villose, margin entire, midrib and lateral nerves prominent on both surfaces, lateral veins 8–11 on each side of the midrib, reaching the margin. Inflorescences densely yellowish villose, paniculate at terminal, fasciculate of (1–)2–4 pseudoracemes or sometimes panicles at axil, 8–25 cm long; primary bracts narrowly triangular-ovate, 4–5 mm long, 1 mm wide at base; secondary bracts 1.5–2.5 mm long. Pedicels 4–5 mm long, deflexed after flowering. Bracteoles absent. Flowers 2–8 per node, fasciculate, opening almost at the same time. Calyx 3–4 mm long, densely yellowish villose outside, 4-lobed; lobes lanceolate, subequal. Corolla 4–5 mm long, white, pale yellow or greenish white; standard elliptic to broadly elliptic, without auricles, claw 1 mm long; wings elliptic, claw 1 mm long; keel-petals 4 mm long, auriculate, claw about 1 mm long. Androecium diadelphous. Pods sessile, 1.2–1.8 cm long, with dense hooked hairs, plicate or straight, 4–7 jointed, both sutures undulate; articles elliptic, 2.5–3 mm long, 1.5 mm wide. Seeds elliptic. Flowers and fruits in September to December.

Distribution: China (Yunnan, Sichuan, and Guizhou), Myanmar and India (Nagaland: Naga Hills).

Specimens examined: CHINA. Yunnan: G. Forrest 8851 (A, BM); Szemao, W Mts. 4500 feet. Henry 12440 (A, NY), loc. cit. Fls. purple. Henry 12440B (A); Mengtze 4800 feet. Fl. white. Henry 9342 (A), loc. cit. 5000 feet. Henry 9342A (A), loc. cit. Henry 9342B (A, CAL), Henry 9624 (CAL); Ping-bien Hsien, Shu-ban-po, alt. 1400 m. C. W. Wang 82088 (KUN, PE); Jenn-yeh Hsian, Meng-pung, border of woods, alt. 750 m. Fls. yellow, keel purplish blue. Oct. 1936. C. W. Wang 78908 (A, KUN); Heqing (type locality), under forest near brook. R. C. Ching 24571 (KUN); loc. cit., on grassy slope, alt. 2400 m. R. C. Ching 24414 (KUN); Xishuangbanna, silver plant on Youluoshan, in moist forest alt. 1350 m. Y. H. Li 3750 (HTBC), 3789 (HTBC); Menglian, under forests, alt. 1200 m. G. D. Tao and X. W. Li 39474 (KUN).


MYANMAR. Rangoon, Mt. Popa. F.G.Dickason 5456 (A); Mindat 4500 ft. F.Kingdon-Ward 22592 (BM).

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References
Desmodium laxiflorum DC. と D. diffusum DC. に酷似しており、しばしば誤同定されるため、3種の区別を明らかにした。

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