Begonia fangii (sect. Coelocentrum, Begoniaceae), a new species from limestone areas in Guangxi, China

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Abstract. Begonia fangii, a new species of sect. Coelocentrum from limestone areas in southwestern Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, is described and illustrated. Somatic chromosome number (2n = 30) is here reported.

Keywords: Begonia fangii; Begonia hemsleyana; Begonia hemsleyana var. kwangsiensis; China; Chromosome number; Guangxi; Limestone flora; New species; Sect. Coelocentrum.

Introduction

Begonia sect. Coelocentrum comprises about 18 species in China (Guangxi, SE Yunnan and S Guizhou) and northern Vietnam (Shui et al., 2002). A number of new species were added to the list of sect. Coelocentrum thereafter (Fang et al., 2004; Ku et al., 2004). In the course of the taxonomic revision of Begonia sect. Coelocentrum, we came across several specimens that bear a superficial resemblance to B. hemsleyana Hook. f. (sect. Platycentrum) but differ markedly in having parietal placentation, a character that is diagnostic of sect. Coelocentrum. Such specimens were collected from limestone areas in SW Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, which harbors many species of Begonia sect. Coelocentrum. We made several field expeditions there and were able to re-collect this remarkable species. A careful study of literature, herbarium specimens and plants grown in the experimental greenhouse reveals that it is a new species of Begonia sect. Coelocentrum.

Species Description


Species nova similis Begoniae hemsleyanae Hook. f. (sect. Platycentrum), sed a qua caulibus longis repentibus (vs. caule erecto cum rhizomate brevi), foliis (3-)4-5(-7) -foliolatis (vs. foliis (6-)7-10(-12) -foliolatis), stylis 3 (vs. stylis 2), et ovario 1-loculari, placatione parietali (vs. ovario 2-loculari, placatione axili) differt.

Plant monoecious; epipetric; perennial. Rhizome succulent, dark purple-red, long creeping (to 50 cm or more), rooting at nodes, 8-15 mm in diameter, internodes to 8-15 cm long (1.5-3 cm at the first anthesis, elongate thereafter), covered with sparse, appressed or ascending hairs. Stipules nearly persistent, red to reddish brown, subglabrous or sparsely sericeous, triangular to narrowly triangular, asymmetric, thickly herbaceous, 12-15 mm long, 9-12 mm wide, apex subcucullate and aristate, margin entire. Leaves alternate, palmately compound; leaflets 3-6, petiolulate, subcoriaceous, dark green above, red or reddish beneath, central leaflet nearly symmetric, lateral leaflets asymmetric, lanceolate or broadly so, 7-15 cm long, 2.5-4.5 cm wide, apex acuminate, base cuneate, rounded or slightly cordate, margins entire, undulate or remotely dentate, subglabrous on upper surface, covered with pressed or slightly ascending hairs along veins on abaxial surface, venation pinnae; petiolule terete, 1.2-2.5 cm long, 2.2-5 mm across; petioles terete, (6-)11-15-(-20) cm long, 4-5 mm across, sericeous, the hairs whitish initially, turning...