

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. *Begonia fangii* is similar to *B. hemsleyana* (sect. *Platycentrum*) in having palmately compound leaves, but it is sharply distinct in having long creeping stem (vs. erect stem with a short rhizome); leaf with (3-)4-5(-7) [vs. (6-)7-10(-12)] leaflets; styles 3 (vs. 2); and ovary 1-locular with parietal placentation (vs. ovary 2-locular with axile placentation).

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

Begonia fangii Y. M. Shui & C.-I Peng, sp. nov.— TYPE: China. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Chungzuo City, Longzhou Xian, Jinlong Xiang, Guiping Village, S of Yianbian Road, on the way to Banyian, 22°42'48" N,

106°47'07" E, elev. ca. 360 m. Broadleaf forest on mountain slope. On rock on steep limestone slope, shaded, abundant. Living collection made on 28 May 2004; type specimen (in flower) pressed from plant cultivated in experimental greenhouse, 14 Jan 2005. *Ching-I Peng* 19778A (holotype: HAST). 方氏秋海棠 Figures 1, 2

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), ovario 1-loculari, placentatione parietali (vs. ovario 2-loculari, placentatione 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 appressed or slightly ascending hairs along veins on abaxial surface, venation pinnate; petiole terete, 1-2.5 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

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