

THE IDENTITY OF THE GENUS AUSTROBUXUS MIQ.
(EUPHORBIACEAE)

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During a geographical survey of the genus *Buxus* in Malaysia I came across the name *Buxus nitidus* (Miq.) Hall. f. Med. Rijksherb. n. 37 (1918) 16. This is based on a plant from Sumatra, collected by Teysmann (HB 769) on the coast of Sibolga, and described by Miquel, Fl. Ind. Bat. Suppl. (1861) 444—445, as the representative of a new genus: *Austrobuxus nitidus* Miq., provided with a generico-specific description.

This genus had tentatively been reduced by Bentham & Hooker (Gen. P. 3, 1880, 280) to another genus of the *Buxaceae*, viz. *Sarcococca*, notwithstanding its decussate leaves; more specially to *S. sumatrana* Bl. Mus. Bot. L. B. 2 (1856) 191, of which I could not find the type; no material was cited with its description.

Miss Th. Mathou in her "Recherches sur la famille des Buxacées" (Trav. Lab. Bot. Fac. Méd. & Pharm. Univ. Toulouse, 1940, 130—136) studied the anatomy and micro-chemistry of a fragment of the type and found anatomical differences with other *Buxus* species of the order of a section. She followed Hallier's reduction of *Austrobuxus nitidus* Miq. to *Buxus nitidus* (Miq.) Hall. f. Because of the anatomical differences she made it the type of a new section, *Buxus* sect. *Austrobuxus* (Miq.) Mathou. She added that it is not conspecific with *Sarcococca sumatrana* Bl.

With the kind permission of Prof. Lanjouw I could borrow the type specimen (2 sheets) from the Herbarium at Utrecht and, though it is sterile but for a single flower bud, this brought to light the surprising fact that it is no *Buxacea*, but manifestly a common Euphorbiaceous Malaysian tree, originally described under another monotypic genus, *Choriophyllum malayanum* Benth. in Hook. Ic. P. 13 (1879) t. 1280 which was later reduced to the genus *Longetia* Baill. (*Adansonia* [2, 1861/62, 228, *nomen*] 6 (1866) 352, t. 9) as *Longetia malayana* (Benth.) Pax & Hoffm. Pfl. Reich Heft 81 (1922) 291. This is an important timber tree of Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, and Borneo.

This identity is disagreeable from the nomenclatorial point of view as the generic name *Austrobuxus* takes precedence over *Longetia*.

In view of the facts (i) that the genus *Longetia* consists of at least 6 species, (ii) that *Austrobuxus* is an obscure name which has not been accepted but continuously been reduced to synonymy for more than a century, (iii) that it is a misleading name suggesting affinity to *Buxus* with which it has nothing to do, (iv) that the type specimen is almost sterile, and (v) that it would be highly inconvenient to both foresters and botanists in Indomalaysia to replace the established generic name *Longetia* by *Austrobuxus*, it seems that this is a clear case to submit *Longetia* for conservation and *Austrobuxus* for rejection; this will be proposed in Taxon.

The specific epithet should, anyhow, be maintained in *Longetia*, as follows:

Longetia nitida (Miq.) Steen. *comb. nov.*—*Austrobuxus nitidus* Miq. Fl. Ind. Bat. Suppl. (1861) 445. — *Choriophyllum malayanum* Bth. in Hook. Ic. Pl. 13 (1879) t. 1280. — *Buxus nitidus* Hall. f. Med. Rijksherb. Leiden n. 37 (1918) 16. — *Longetia malayana* Pax & Hoffm. Pfl. Reich Heft 81 (1922) 291.