



Ocotea dilcherii, a new name for *Ocotea obtusifolia* (Berry) LaMotte (Lauraceae)

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The fossil species *Oreodaphne obtusifolia* Berry (1916: 301) was described, based on the fossil leaf remains of the most abundant laurel from the Early Eocene Wilcox Group sediments of Holly Springs: Marshall Co, Grenada Co., Miss.: Mississippi embayment (Southeastern North America). Nowadays, most systematists consider the extant *Oreodaphne* to be a member of *Ocotea* (Mez, 1889: 219; Rohwer, 1986; van der Werff, 2002; Chanderbali *et al.*, 2001). LaMotte (1952) transferred Berry's (1916: 301) combination to *Ocotea*, and this transfer was followed by Dilcher (1963), who reinforced attribution of Wilcox leaf megafossils to *Ocotea* by cuticular analysis of epidermis and stomata (Dilcher & Lott, 2005). However, according to Art. 53.1 of the ICN (McNeill *et al.* 2012) the name *Ocotea obtusifolia* (Berry) LaMotte (1952) is illegitimate because of the existence of the earlier overlooked homonym, *Ocotea obtusifolia* Kunth (1817: 165–166), an extant lauraceous species from Colombia (Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, holotype: <http://plants.jstor.org/stable/10.5555/al.ap.specimen.P00128771>). The homonymy between these fossil and extant American species of *Ocotea* was revealed during the description of the new fossil Early Oligocene species *Ocotea rossica* Vikulin from the south of the Middle-Russian upland (Vikulin, 2015: 326). Since *Ocotea obtusifolia* (Berry) LaMotte has been systematically recognized as a valid species in current use and it does not have any synonym, a *nomen novum*, *O. dilcherii*, is formally proposed here as a replaced name. Because a type specimen was not indicated among the validating illustrations of Berry (1916: pl. 80, fig. 1; pl. 83, fig. 2–5, and pl. 84, fig. 1 and 2), a lectotype must be designated here, from the specimens illustrated in the protologue (Berry, 1916: 301–302) amongst those perfect specimens with blunt leaf apex, which are very abundant in the clays at Puryear, Tenn. (Proposed lectotype: paleobotany collection # USNM 35867, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (USA), illustrated in Berry, 1916: 301, pl. 83, fig. 5).

Systematics

Family *Lauraceae* Jussieu (1789: 80)

Genus *Ocotea* Aublet (1775: 780)

Ocotea dilcherii Vikulin, *nom. nov.*

Replaced synonym: *Ocotea obtusifolia* (Berry) LaMotte (1952: 234), *nom. illeg.*, non Kunth (1817: 165, 166).

Lectotype (designated here):—UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: paleobotany collection # USNM 35867, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (USA), illustrated in Berry, 1916: US Geol. Surv., Prof. Paper 91: 301, pl. 83, fig. 5).

Etymology:—in honor of David Dilcher, paleobotanist and member of the US National Academy of Sciences.

Stratigraphy:—Early Eocene, Lagrange formation (in beds of Wilcox age) at Puryear, Tenn.

Geography:—Mississippi embayment (Southeastern North America), USA.

References

- Aublet, F. (1775) *Histoire des plantes de la Guiane Française*. Vol. 2. Pierre-François Didot, Paris, 355 pp.
Berry, E.W. (1916) The Lower Eocene Floras of Southeastern North America. *United States Geological Survey Professional Paper* 91: 1–481.
Bonpland, A., Humboldt, A. von & Kunth, K.S. (1817) *Nova genera et species plantarum*. Quarto Ed. Vol. 2. Sumtibus Librariae Graeco-