



## Clearing up *Vietnamosasa* (Poaceae, Bambusoideae): typification and nomenclature of a distinctive paleotropical bamboo genus

Thomas HAEVERMANS<sup>1</sup>, Bich Loan NGUYEN<sup>2,3</sup>, Jacques GURGAND<sup>3</sup>, Agathe HAEVERMANS<sup>1</sup>, Soejatmi DRANSFIELD<sup>4</sup> & My Hanh DIEP<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Département Systématique et Evolution, Unité Mixte de Recherche 7205 CNRS/MNHN Origine Structure et Evolution de la Biodiversité, Case postale 39, 57 rue Cuvier, F-75231, Paris Cedex 05, France  
E-mail: [haever@mnhn.fr](mailto:haever@mnhn.fr)

<sup>2</sup>Vietnam National University, University of Natural Sciences, Department of Biology, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

<sup>3</sup>Phu An Bamboo Village, 124 road 744, Phu An, Ben Cat, Binh Duong, Vietnam

<sup>4</sup>The Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 3AB, United Kingdom

This paper aims to clarify and stabilize the nomenclature of the singular fire-adapted South-East Asian bamboo genus *Vietnamosasa* Nguyen (1990: 221), and the specific taxa it comprises, by designating lectotypes and neotypes to allow accurate application of the published names. Little attention has been given to this genus in the last 10 years, partly because its three published species are difficult to distinguish from each other, but mostly due to the fact that the type specimen of the type species is reportedly lost, and the fact that the original description is inadequate and does not include illustrations of the new taxa. The genus is readily recognizable by its special “grass-mound” appearance and the morphology of its subterranean organs: rhizomes as well as subterranean vegetative axes growing horizontally, which allow the bamboo to thrive in fire prone areas (Dransfield 2000).

In 1919, Camus described *Arundinaria ciliata* Camus (1919: 672), based on a collection by Pierre from the Kampong Thom area in Cambodia. A couple of years later, a second closely aligned species was described as *Arundinaria pusilla* Chevalier & Camus (1921: 450), from specimens collected in Vietnam (Annam, Lang bian, Dran, 1000-1200 m, Chevalier 40330, 40508 & 40600). These authors distinguish *A. ciliata* from *A. pusilla* as follows: "L'*A. pusilla* est proche de l'*A. ciliata* A. Camus, mais s'en distingue par ses épillets bien plus longs, en fascicules bien moins nombreux, les glumelles inférieures à nervures plus nombreuses et dépassant nettement les glumelles supérieures, surtout dans les fleurs inférieures, enfin par les chaumes florifères très glabres". The main differences between these two species are the overall size of the plant, the length of the spikelets, and the pubescence of the fertile culms.

Nakai (1925) transferred *Arundinaria ciliata* to the genus *Oreostachys* Gamble (1908: 685), publishing the combination *Oreostachys ciliata* (Camus 1919: 672) Nakai (1925: 152) [unintentionally omitting the “i” in *Oreostachys*], without mentioning the reasons for this choice. Nakai did not mention *Arundinaria pusilla* and its status.

Chao & Renvoize (1989) considered *Arundinaria ciliata* and *A. pusilla* conspecific and part of the genus *Racemobambos* Holltum (1956: 268), a scandent genus from Southeast Asia. They published the combination *Racemobambos ciliata* (Camus 1919: 672) Chao & Renvoize (1989: 365), and considered *A. pusilla* a synonym of *R. ciliata*. They placed *Neomicrocalamus* Keng (1983: 10) in synonymy under *Racemobambos* [= the illegitimate *Microcalamus* Gamble (1890: 207), non Franchet (1889: 282)].

In 1990, Nguyen described the genus *Vietnamosasa*, typified by a new taxon she also described in her paper: *Vietnamosasa darlacensis* Nguyen (1990: 221), from a specimen originally collected in 1973 by Nguyen Vu Can in the “Darlac” area (i.e. the Đắk Lắk + Đắk Nông provinces). The characteristics of this species are defined as being close to the broadly delimited genus *Arundinaria* Michaux (1803: 73). Nguyen (1990) also placed *V. ciliata* (Camus 1919: 672) Nguyen (1990: 222) and *V. pusilla* (Chevalier & Camus 1921: 450) Nguyen (1990: 222) in the newly created *Vietnamosasa*. No mention was made of earlier studies dealing