



Hellenia Retz., the correct name for *Cheilocostus* C.D.Specht (Costaceae)

RAFAËL GOVAERTS

H.L.A.A., Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond TW9 3AE, U.K.

E-mail: R.Govaerts@kew.org

Abstract

In recent years numerous authors have suggested various generic placements for the Crape Ginger but still no valid available name has been published. I therefore give a short overview and make the necessary combinations.

Introduction

Crape Ginger is a widespread species from tropical Asia and widely cultivated and naturalised elsewhere in the tropics where the rhizome is used for medicinal and cosmetic purposes. Until recently the species was known as *Costus speciosus* (Koenig 1783: 75) Smith (1791: 249). When Specht & Stevenson (2006) proposed to put the species in a separate genus the species became variously known as *Cheilocostus speciosus* (J.Koenig) C.D.Specht (2006: 159), “*Pyxa speciosa* (J.Koenig) R.M.Almeida (2009: 113),” nom. inval., and “*Hellenia speciosa* (J.Koenig) S.R.Dutta (2010: 152),” nom. inval. In total six genera and seven species names have been proposed for separating the Crape Ginger from the genus *Costus*, none of which are available and correct.

When Specht & Stevenson (2006) proposed a new phylogeny-based classification of the family Costaceae Nakai, they published the new genus *Cheilocostus* C.D.Specht. As the type species they choose *C. speciosus* based on *Banksea speciosa* J.Koenig (1783: 75). This last name is the only and thus obligate type species for the genus *Banksea* J.Koenig (1783: 75), but as this generic name is a later parohomonym of *Banksia* J.R.Forster & G.Forster (1775: 7), to which it is sufficiently alike to be confused and should be treated as a homonym (Vienna ICBN Art. 53, 2006), it first appears that *Cheilocostus* is a replacement name for *Banksea*. However, already in 1791, Retzius had published a replacement name for *Banksea*, namely *Hellenia* Retzius (1791: 18). Consequently, *Cheilocostus* is an illegitimate superfluous name for *Hellenia*, which should be taken up for this genus. Almeida (2009) took up the generic name *Pyxa* Noronha for *Cheilocostus*. This generic name has however never been validly published and is listed without description by Noronha. Dutta (2010) stated that the name was later validated by Miquel, but he merely mentions it in synonymy under *Costus*. Dutta (2010) was however correct in recognising that *Hellenia* is the earliest available name. Unfortunately he considered the name *Banksea speciosa* as illegitimate, and therefore failed to cite it (see ICBN Art. 33, Ex. 20) as the correct basionym for his intended combination for the Crape Ginger under *Hellenia*. Art. 55.1 (ICBN, 2006) clearly states that species names placed under illegitimate generic names are not illegitimate themselves and therefore the name *Banksea speciosa* is the earliest legitimate name requiring transfer to *Hellenia*.

Although it would be possible to conserve the name *Cheilocostus*, I feel it has been published too recently, and both *Pyxa* and *Hellenia* have been used for the genus in the meantime. I therefore propose the following new combinations. One other combination, *H. globosa* (Blume) S.R.Dutta (2010: 152), was already validly published by Dutta.

Taxonomy

Hellenia Retzius (1791: 18).

Replaced synonyms: *Banksea* J.Koenig (1783: 75), nom. illeg., *Tsiana* J.F.Gmel. (1791: 9), nom. superfl., *Planera* Giseke (1792: 202), nom. superfl., *Cheilocostus* C.D.Specht (2006: 159), nom. superfl.

Type: *Banksea speciosa* J.Koenig

Hellenia borneensis (A.D.Poulsen) Govaerts, *comb. nov.*

Basionym:—*Cheilocostus borneensis* A.D.Poulsen (2010: 136).

Hellenia lacera (Gagnep.) Govaerts, *comb. nov.*

Basionym:—*Costus lacerus* Gagnepain (1903: 261).

Hellenia sopuensis (Maas & H.Maas) Govaerts, *comb. nov.*

Basionym:—*Costus sopuensis* Maas & H.Maas, (1983: 325).

Hellenia speciosa (J.Koenig) Govaerts, *comb. nov.*

Basionym:—*Banksea speciosa* J.Koenig (1783: 75).

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