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Molecular phylogenetics and morphology support two new genera (*Memoremea* and *Nihon*) of Boraginaceae s.s.

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Abstract

Omphalodes (Boraginaceae s.s., Cynoglosseae s.l.) comprises ca. 29 species of annual and perennial plants distributed in three main disjunct areas: Western Palearctic, Japan and SW of North America. This paper uses micromorphological and DNA data to re-assess the monophyly and taxonomy of the genus. Morphological characters of 15 species of *Omphalodes* and four closely-related genera were analysed using SEM. A total of 82 ITS and 68 *trnL-trnF* sequences were newly sequenced, including 14 species of *Omphalodes* and three genera of the tribe Cynoglosseae. Phylogenetic analyses of 57 genera (186 species) of Boraginaceae indicated that *Omphalodes* as currently circumscribed is formed by three independent lineages, which were supported by morphological characters of the fruit. As a result, and in the interest of a more natural classification, two new genera are described to accommodate *Omphalodes scorpioides* (*Memoremea*) from Europe and the Japanese species (*Nihon*). *Memoremea* is distinguished from all the other species previously included in *Omphalodes* by the apical attachment scar and the hollow nutlet margin. *Nihon* is easily discriminated by the abrupt change of margin ornamentation towards the nutlet aperture. We also provided a taxonomic treatment that proposes the lowest number of nomenclature changes, although six new combinations are required.

Key words: Carpology, DNA sequences, Scanning Electron Microscopy, Systematics

Introduction

Boraginaceae s.s. (=Boraginaceae subfam. Boraginoideae; Al-Shehbaz, 1991; Gürke, 1893) comprises 112 genera and about 1600 species (Stevens 2001 onwards) of herbaceous plants and shrubs. Between four and 13 tribes have been traditionally recognized within the Boraginaceae s.s. based on morphological characters (De Candolle 1846, Baillon 1890, Gürke 1893, Johnston 1924, Popov 1953, Al-Shehbaz 1991, Riedl 1997). Nutlet macromorphology has traditionally been used to divide Boraginaceae into either 13 (Popov 1953) or six (Riedl 1997) tribes. However, molecular phylogenies of the family are largely congruent with synthetic treatments that reduce tribal division into four tribes: Lithospermeae, Boragineae, Echiochileae and Cynoglosseae s.l. (Långström & Chase 2002, Långström & Oxelman 2003, Weigend *et al.* 2010, Nazaire & Hufford 2012, Weigend *et al.* 2013, Cohen 2014). The three first tribes are each supported by autoapomorphic carpological characters: Echiochileae is characterized by a basal or submedial attachment scar and a flat to pyramidal gynobase (Långström & Chase 2002); Lithospermeae mostly present ovoid, keeled, slightly compressed and strongly incurved nutlets with a broad basal attachment scar and a flat gynobase (Långström & Chase 2002, Weigend *et al.* 2010); and Boragineae is basally attached with planar gynobase and basal annulus surrounding the scar (Hilger *et al.* 2004). The fourth tribe (Cynoglosseae s.l.), recognized based on molecular phylogenetics, includes a set of morphologically heterogeneous subtribes, showing the widest variety of nutlet morphology and ornamentation, including deeply dentate margins, glochidia, papillae or even surface completely smooth, and gynophore configuration from nearly flat to pyramidal. Some genera also have a more or less thickened wing. The most recent phylogenetic reconstructions (Cohen 2014; Weigend *et al.* 2013) recovered six well-supported major groups within Cynoglosseae s.l.: Trichodesmeae, Eritrichieae, Myosotideae, *Omphalodes* s.s., *Mertensia* clade, and Cynoglosseae s.s. This latter comprises *Cynoglossum* Linnaeus (1753:134) and related genera (e.g. *Paracaryum* Boissier (1849: 128), *Rindera* Pallas (1771: 486), *Solenanthus* Ledebour (1829: 8) and *Trachelanthus* Kunze (1850: 665)), several East Asian genera (e.g. *Bothriospermum* Bunge (1831: 47), *Microula* Bentham (1876: 853)), and the taxa previously considered within the subtribe Cryptanthinae.

Conclusions

The phylogenetic reconstructions of our study, coupled with morphological characters of the nutlet, help us to propose a more natural classification of *Omphalodes* species. The inclusion of 14 of the 29 recognized species of *Omphalodes* in our phylogenetic study, clearly supports the polyphyly of the genus. Indeed, we found three independent lineages, which were consistent with results from recent publications. The morphological nutlet differences herein found provided further support for the three lineages of *Omphalodes*. In addition, vegetative and reproductive (inflorescence, pollen ornamentation) characters used in previous taxonomic treatments give solid grounds to recognise three genera, two of them newly proposed: *Memoremea* and *Nihon*. Despite the considerable sampling effort made for this study, additional investigations are needed to infer phylogenetic relationships of all the species of *Omphalodes* from North America and within *Nihon*. Our study has also provided an extended phylogenetic reconstruction of Boraginaceae s.s., especially tribe Cynoglosseae s.l., which also needs further sample of species and DNA sequencing regions.

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