

A Gentle, and Well Taken Correction from the Boss

Dear Mr. Savage:

As usual I looked with interest through the recently received Newsletter of the American Magnolia Society, vol. IX No. 3, (July 1973).

I was particularly interested in your note "More on *Michelia figo*" on pp. 13-15, in which you rightly point out that *Michelia figo* is the correct botanical name for the species concerned. In your final paragraph you state that the description of *Michelia yunnanensis* is practically a carbon copy of the subject species (*M. figo*) and that a closer acquaintance will be necessary to determine if it is truly distinct.

It is true that *M. yunnanensis* is closely related to *M. figo*, but having examined a large number of specimens of both species I can assure you that they are very distinct both morphologically and geographically.

M. figo as a wild plant is restricted to S.E. China, occurring from S. Anhwei and S. Kiangsu through Chekiang, E. & S. Kiangsi and Fukien to Kwangtung, Hongkong and N. Kwangsi. It has 6 tepals, 2-ovulate carpels, and leaves which are more or less pubescent but not tomentellous beneath.

M. yunnanensis (which includes *M. dandyi* Hu!) is a native of S.W. China in S.W. Szechwan, Yunnan and Kweichow. It looks very different from *M. figo* (one can't convey this in words), the tepals vary in number from 6 to 13 (perhaps more), the carpels have 3-8 ovules, and the leaves are often appressed-tomentellous beneath. It cannot be confused with *M. figo*.

As I have already remarked, these two species, despite their differences, are closely related; in fact they form a distinct section of the genus *Michelia* for which I shall shortly be proposing a sectional name. This section is characterized by the relatively small leaves with a short petiole to which the stipules are more or less adnate, and by the absence or obsolescence of a connective-appendage at the apex of the stamens.

I hope that the above observations will be of use to you.

With best wishes,
Yours sincerely,

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