



A new Amazonian species of *Ficus* L. (Moraceae)

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Abstract

A new species of *Ficus* L. sect. *Americanae* Miq. is described and illustrated in this paper as *Ficus nigrotuberculata*. It is characterized mainly by the surface of the syconium, which is covered with small black protuberances, and ostiole tubiform, and shows morphological similarities with *F. pertusa* L.f., *F. trachelosyce* Dugand and *F. tubulosa* Pelissari & Romaniuc. A key of these related species is also presented.

Resumo

Uma nova espécie de *Ficus* L. seção *Americanae* Miq. é descrita e ilustrada, no presente artigo, como *Ficus nigrotuberculata*. É caracterizada, principalmente, pela superfície do sicônio que é coberta por pequenas protuberâncias negras, e ostíolo em forma de tubo, e apresenta similaridade morfológica com *F. pertusa* L.f., *F. trachelosyce* Dugand e *F. tubulosa* Pelissari & Romaniuc. Uma chave de identificação dessas espécies relacionadas é apresentada.

Key words: Amazonian forest, *Americanae*, *Ficus pertusa* complex, Neotropical flora

Introduction

The genus *Ficus* L. (Linnaeus 1753: 1059) stands out for its importance in tropical ecosystems. Members of this genus have edible fruits, are maintainers of the food chain of wildlife, and excel as hemi epiphytes species. The root system is so extensive, particularly in the subgenus *Urostigma* (Gasp.) Miq. (Miquel 1867: 260), which comes to form a vast tangle able to fix the soil and prevent erosion (Carauta 1989). It is the largest genus in Moraceae, with approximately 800 species and tropical to subtropical distribution, rarely in temperate regions. It is characterized mainly by its arboreal to hemi-epiphytic habit, milky latex in all parts of the plant, terminal stipules well-developed, leaves with a glandular spot at the base of midrib and inflorescence (syconium) which contains minute staminate and pistillate flowers, of which the anthers and stigmas are not exposed during flowering (Carauta 1989, Berg & Villavicencio 2004).

The study of species of *Ficus pertusa* complex has been a big surprise from the morphological point of view. Since the proposition by Berg (1981) until the last works of this author, 52 synonyms were proposed and the complex was separated in informal entities (Berg 2007), according to morphology temperate regions and its geographical distribution: ‘pertusa-form’, ‘subtriplinervia-form’, ‘padifolia-form’, ‘arpazusa-form’, ‘broadwayi-form’ and ‘trachelosyce-form’. *Ficus trachelosyce* Dugand (1942: 69) was recently re-established as a species (Pelissari & Romaniuc 2014), due to the careful study of the protologues and type materials.

Key to related species in *Ficus pertusa* complex

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| 1. | Syconium with umbilicate ostiole, up to 1.5 mm high..... | <i>F. pertusa</i> |
| 1. | Syconium with tubiform to infundibuliform ostiole, more than 2 mm high..... | 2 |
| 2. | Syconia 10–12 mm in diameter; infundibuliform ostiole..... | <i>F. trachelosyce</i> |
| 2. | Syconia 5–7 mm in diameter; ostiole tubiform..... | 3 |
| 3. | Lamina elliptic, 6–14 x 3–6 cm, base acute to cuneate, apex short acuminate (0.5 cm); surface of the syconia corrugated; peduncle 0.4–1 cm long..... | <i>F. tubulosa</i> |