(2831) Proposal to conserve the name *Exostema* against *Coutarea* (*Rubiaceae*)

Werner Greuter[1] & Rosa Rankin-Rodríguez[2]

1 *Botanischer Garten & Botanisches Museum Berlin, Freie Universität, Königin-Luise-Str. 6–8, 14195 Berlin, Germany*
2 *Jardín Botánico Nacional, Universidad de la Habana, C.P. 19230 Calabazar, Boyeros, Cuba*
Addresses for correspondence: *Werner Greuter, w.greuter@bgbm.org; Rosa Rankin-Rodríguez, rosarankin@fbio.uh.cu*

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(2831) ***Exostema*** (Pers.) Bonpl. in Humboldt & Bonpland, Pl. Aequinoct. 1: 131. Apr 1807 (*Cinchona* subg. *Exostema* Pers., Syn. Pl. 1: 196. 1 Apr–15 Jun 1805) [*Rub.*], nom. cons. prop.
Typus: *Cinchona caribaea* Jacq. (*E. caribaeum* (Jacq.) Roem. & Schult.).

(=) *Coutarea* Aubl., Hist. Pl. Guiane: 314. Jun–Dec 1775, nom. rej. prop.
Type: *C. speciosa* Aubl., nom. illeg. (*Portlandia hexandra* Jacq., *C. hexandra* (Jacq.) K. Schum.).

As detailed in a background paper to be published separately (Greuter & Rankin, in press), results of a comprehensive nucleotide sequence analysis of both plastid and nuclear DNA of a large number of species of the tribe *Chiococceae* Benth. & Hook. f. (Paudyal & al. in Bot. J. Linn. Soc. 187: 365–396. 2018) entail a reconsideration of generic boundaries in what these authors define as their clade B (the "*Exostema-Solenandra-Coutarea-Hintonia* group"). Rather than recognising seven genera in that group (the four afore-named plus the newly described *Coutareopsis*, *Adolphoduckea*, and *Motleyothamnus*, the two latter unispecific), we concluded that recognition of a single, monophyletic genus is more convenient, being more informative and better in line with current and traditional treatments.

A genus so defined is to comprise 40 species of woody plants (trees and shrubs) of the new World tropics, forming five natural, morphologically definable sections. For reasons of priority the name of that genus would be *Coutarea*, unless the present proposal is accepted, in which case *Exostema* could be retained for it. Currently, for the 47 taxa of sectional, specific and subspecific rank recognised by us, only 9 names are available under *Coutarea*, as contrasted with 37 already available under *Exostema*. If our proposal were to be rejected, 37 new combinations would have to be published, as contrasted with 9 in case of acceptance (we refrain from proposing these combinations as long as the decision on the proposal is pending). It is of note that acceptance of the present proposal would not compromise the use of the generic name *Coutarea* for the traditionally defined, small genus (47 species) that excludes the type of *Exostema*. However, expanding the use of *Coutarea* to include *Exostema*, resulting from rejection of the proposal, would have the unwelcome consequence of increasing the risk of confusion between *Coutarea* and the similarly spelled name *Coussarea* Aubl., in general use for a large genus of woody Neotropical *Rubiaceae*.

Exostema was published by Bonpland (in Humboldt & Bonpland, Pl. Aequinoct. 1: 131. 1807), who acknowledged that the generic description and subsequent observations on the genus had been provided to him by L.C. Richard, but did not ascribe the name itself to Richard. The generic name *Exostema* was typified on *E. caribaeum* by Rogers (in J. Arnold Arbor. 68: 165. 1987). The genus is of considerable biological and systematic interest as a model genus for studying evolutionary processes in insular environments; over 30 taxa, most of them Cuban endemics, have been considered by Berazaín & al. (in Bissea 3, Num. Espec. [1]: 82–84. 2009) as being threatened in some way. Otherwise, the economic importance of the genus is perhaps rather marginal. *Exostema caribaeum*, along with other Caribbean species, is renowned for producing "one of the most beautiful woods of Cuba" [transl.] (Roig, Dicc. Bot. Nombr. Vulg. Cub., ed. 4: 268–270. 2014, entry "cerillo"). The very bitter bark and fruits of the same species, and most prominently of the Lesser Antillean *E. sanctae-luciae*, are used in folk medicine as a surrogate of quinine for its febrifuge (and also emetic) properties (Roig, Pl. Medic., Aromát. Venen., ed. [3]: 284–286. 2012, entry "carey"). With their heavily scented white flowers, *Exostema* species may show future promise as ornamental shrubs or trees, but are not so far reported as having been used as such.

Author information
WG, http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8677-7544
RRR, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7328-0395

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