

**Comment on the identity of *Hellenia speciosa*(J. Koenig ex Smith)  
S. Dutta & *Hellenia speciosa*(J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta var  
*dilnavazii* (M.R. Almeida & S.M. Almeida) S. Dutta**

**Suchandra Dutta**

Department of Botany, R.D. National College, Bandra (W), Mumbai 400 050, Maharashtra, India  
*E-mail:* suchandra.dutta@gmail.com

[Received revised 15.05.2013; Accepted 02.06.2013]

**Abstract**

While establishing the correct identity, S. Dutta mentioned the basionym cited for the name *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta is *Costus speciosus* Koenig ex Smith. The name "*Costus speciosus*" itself is a new combination based on *Banksea speciosa* J.G. Koenig. Hence, the new name becomes illegitimate, thus making the other combinations based on this name also become illegitimate. An attempt is made to rectify the mistake and legitimately publish the name *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta.

**Key words:** *Banksea speciosa* J.G. Koenig; Basionym; *Hellenia speciosa*

Two new combinations namely, *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta and *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta var *dilnavazii* (M.R. Almeida & S.M. Almeida) S. Dutta were published as correct scientific name of *Costus speciosus* (J. Koenig) Smith and its variety *dilnavazii* respectively by Suchandra Dutta in *Pleione* 4(1): 148 – 154. 2010.

In the publication referred above, the basionym cited for the name *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta is *Costus speciosus* J. Koenig ex Smith (Trans. Linn. Soc. 1: 249. 1791). This is not a legitimately published name and hence invalid. It is invalid as the name "*Costus speciosus*" itself is a recombination based on *Banksea speciosa* J.G. Koenig. Although *Banksea* Koenig is illegitimate, but *B. speciosa* Koenig can serve as a basionym.

Hence, the correct basionym for the recombined name *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig) S.R. Dutta (comb. nov.) is *Banksea speciosa* Koenig published in Retzius, Observ. Bot. 3: 75. 1783.

Since, the basionym for the basionym cited for the name *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta is *Costus speciosus* Koenig ex Smith, Trans. Linn. Soc. 1: 249. 1791 is incorrect, the name *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig ex Smith) S. Dutta var *dilnavazii* (M.R. Almeida & S. M. Almeida) S. Dutta is also wrong.

The correct name for this should be *Hellenia speciosa* (J. Koenig) S. Dutta var *dilnavazii* (M.R. Almeida & S.M. Almeida) S. Dutta (comb. nov.). Basionym: *Costus*

*speciosus* (Koenig ex Retzius) Smith var. *dilnavazii* M R. Almeida & S. M. Almeida, in JBNHS 96: 355, t.1, 1999.

### **Acknowledgements**

The author acknowledges and sincerely thanks Dr. K.N. Gandhi, Harvard University for critical review of the problem on *Hellenia* nomenclature published earlier in 2010 and for his help in solving the existing nomenclatural problem.

### **LITERATURE CITED**

- Dutta, S. 2010. Identity of *Costus* L. and comment on the identity of *Costus speciosus* (J. Koenig) Smith in India. *Pleione* 4(1): 148 – 154.
- LaFrankie, J.V. 2012. Checklist of Philippine Costaceae (Draft version). *Flora of Philippines* updated July 2012, Online search: <http://www.philippineflora.info/Checklist/Costaceae%20Checklist.html>