

ARE EPIPREMNUM SCHOTT, RHAPHIDOPHORA HASSK. AND MONSTERA ADANS. CONGENERIC?

by

R. C. BAKHUIZEN VAN DEN BRINK

(Rijksherbarium, Leiden)

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There is much confusion about the identity of the above mentioned aroid genera, the typification of which is still unsatisfactory.

Epipremnum Schott

Schott (Bonplandia 5, 1857, 45) established the genus *Epipremnum*, which was distinguished from its allies by having a one-celled ovary with 2 basal ovules. Neither type species has been designed, nor were specimens mentioned. The native country was not given, but it is surely to be assumed that the plant hails from S.E. Asia. One year later (Gen. Aroid., 1858, t. 79) Schott described the first species *Epipremnum mirabile* Schott. No alterations were made in the generic characters but he added to his description '*Synonyma. Pothos Auctorum (pro parte), Scindapsus Schott olim et Auctorum (pro parte). Geographica. In Java et insulis adjacentibus provenit*'. In 1860 (Prodr. Syst. Aroid. p. 388) an extensive diagnosis of *Epipremnum mirabile* was given by Schott, based on Javanese material. '*Java. Zollinger. - v.v. et expl. s. plur. Synon. Rhaphidophora lacera Hassk. p.p. Scindapsus decursivus. Zollinger*'. A second species (*E. giganteum* Schott) was added, but now also the generic characters remained unaltered.

Rhaphidophora Hasskarl

Hasskarl (Flora 25, 1842, Beibl. no. 1, p. 11; in Hoeve & De Vriese, Tijdschr. Nat. Gesch. & Phys. 9, 1842, 168; Cat, 1844, 58) described a new monotypic genus *Rhaphidophora*, characterized by an one-celled ovary with one ovule, with the addition '*Syn. Pothos pertusus Rxb. Ind. I. 458. Nom. Sund. Lolloh keboh (buffalus)*'. The only species was *R. lacera* Hassk. *Pothos pertusa* Roxb. (Fl. Ind. ed. Carey & Wall. 1, 1820, 456) is said to be a native of the Coast of Coromandel. The number of the ovules is not exactly known ('*the number to each germ cannot be determined, but I think about four*'). I have not seen the type specimen, neither has Engler. The vernacular name "Lolloh keboh" suspects that Hasskarl had west-javanese material at his disposal. In 1848 (Pl. Jav. Rar. p. 155) Hasskarl gave an extensive description of this *Rhaphidophora lacera*, based on west-javanese specimens. Here for the first time he altered the generic characters, stating that his former observations were erroneous. I cite '*spatha persistente, (nec*

germine 1-loculato, gemmula 1, uti erroneë antea dixi'), '*germinibus 2-loculatis, gemmulis in loculo quoque binis,'*'.

Rhaphidophora Hassk. now can be defined thus as having a 2-celled ovary with 4 basal ovules. As synonym to *R. lacera* Hassk. were added '*Scindapsus pertusus* Schtt. (*Pothos* Rxb. Ind. I. 456). Knth. En. III. 62. 4 et *S. pinnatus* Schtt. Knth. l. c. 5;'. *Scindapsus pinnatus* (L.) Engl. Engler (Arac.-Monst. p. 62) states '*ovula 1—3 placentaë prope basin inserta*'. The javanese *Epipremnum* species can be characterized now as having an incompletely 2-celled (seemingly 1-celled), 1—4-ovuled ovary. It seems clear therefore that *Epipremnum mirabile* Schott (*E. pinnatum* (L.) Engl.) and *Rhaphidophora lacera* Hassk. (minime quoad spec. jav.) belong to one and the same genus, and are even conspecific.

Engler's statement that *Epipremnum* is characterized by a one-celled, 2—8-ovuled ovary, with basal (to parietal-uniseriate) ovules, and *Rhaphidophora* by an incompletely 2-celled (seemingly one-celled), many-ovuled ovary, with parietal-biseriate ovules, cannot be maintained from a taxonomic point too, as the differentiating characters seem to be unreliable. From the habit it is quite impossible to distinguish both genera; entire and divided leaves occur in both, and even in the inflorescences and flowers no essential differences are extant which may justify the view of keeping both genera separate.

The nomenclature of both genera now runs as follows:

Rhaphidophora Hassk. in *Flora* 25 (1842) II, Beibl. no. 1, p. 11; in Hoeve & De Vriese, *Tijdschr. Nat. Gesch. & Phys.* 9 (1842) 168. (Type: *R. lacera* Hassk.) — *Epipremnum* Schott in *Bonplandia* 5 (1857) 45; *Gen. Aroid.* (1858) t. 79. (Type: *E. mirabile* Schott).

***Monstera* Adans.**

This genus as accepted generally is in every detail the American representative of the Old World *Rhaphidophora*. Both genera in taxonomic respects too are so much alike that hardly any objection could be raised if they are considered congeneric. The only difference (if really existing!) might be the presence of staminodes in *Monstera* and their absence in *Rhaphidophora*. This supposed differentiating character, however, needs confirmation and a careful examination of all American and Old World species for this purpose is necessary. Besides, *Monstera* Adans. (Fam. Pl. 2, 1763, 470 & 578) is illegitimate, being a superfluous name for *Dracontium* L. The correct name for the combined genus should then be *Rhaphidophora* Hassk., but I leave it to a future monographer to decide the matter.