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You 'Sau' Me! A new species and a rediscovery in the genus *Saurauia* (Actinidiaceae) from Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao Island, Philippines

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Abstract. A new species and a rediscovery in the genus *Saurauia* (Actinidiaceae) from Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao island, Philippines are presented here. The new species, *Saurauia abbreviata*, closely resembles *Saurauia lanaensis* Merr. but can be differentiated by having longer petioles, uniformly setose adaxial leaf surface, longer and wider leaves, more lateral veins, 3 styles, and a 3(–4)-locular ovary. This discovery raises the current number of recognized *Saurauia* in the Philippines to 57 following an 87-year gap in the taxonomic study of this genus in the country. *S. longipedicellata* Merr. is also rediscovered after almost a century. A lectotype is here assigned for this name selected among the syntypes. Photographs, ecological notes, and an amended description are also provided to aid taxonomic identification.

Abstrak. Usa ka bag-ong species ug nadiskobrehan pag-usab sa genus nga *Saurauia* (Actinidiaceae) gikan sa Zamboanga Peninsula, isla sa Mindanao, Philippines ang gipresentar dinhi. Ang bag-ong species, *Saurauia abbreviata*, nahisama pag-ayo sa *Saurauia lanaensis* Merr. apan ang bag-ong species adunay labi ka taas nga mga petioles, uniformly setose ang ilalom nga dahon, mas taas ug mas lapad nga dahon, labi pang mga lateral veins, 3 styles, ug 3(–4)-locular nga obaryo. Ang nadiskobrehan nagdugang sa kadaghanon sa mga giila nga *Saurauia* sa Pilipinas ngadto sa 57 human sa 87 ka tuig nga gintang sa taxonomic nga pagtuon sa kini nga genus sa nasud. Ang *Saurauia longipedicellata* Merr. nadiskobrehan usab pagkahuman sa hapit usa ka gatus ka tuig. Ang tipipikasyon gihimo dinhi aron mapalig-og ang ngalan. Mga litrato, mga notang ekolohikal, ug giusab nga hulagway alang sa maong species makita usab dinhi.

Keywords: Actinidia, Actinidiaceae, endemism, Philippines, taxonomy.

INTRODUCTION

Saurauia Willd. is a large genus currently composed of ca. 300 species distributed in the tropical and sub-tropical areas of both the old and new worlds (Briggs 2015). Together with the genera *Actinidia* Lindl. and *Clematoclethra* (Franch.) Maxim., *Saurauia* is currently included in the family Actinidiaceae Engl. & Gilg (POWO 2019). Advancement in the taxonomy of *Saurauia* has been hampered due to the extent of morphological variation within species being largely undetermined. This has made species delineation difficult, and recognizing undescribed taxa very challenging (Conn & Damas 2013), especially in the Malesian Region where a great diversity of this taxon is largely unknown up to date.

The first species of *Saurauia* described for the Philippines, *S. latibractea* Choisy, was based on a collection

by Hugh Cuming, who collected natural history collections there from 1836 to 1839 (van Welzen 2017). Elmer Drew Merrill continued the advancement in the study of this genus during the American occupation of the Philippines with 6 species published in the Govt. Lab. Publ. 35 (Merrill 1906). He likewise mentioned 48 species in his Enum. Philipp. Flow. Plants (EPFP) III (1923) and EPFP IV (1925). Moreover, *S. gigantifolia* Quisumb. and *S. knemifolia* Quisumb. were added to the list in 1944. Leonard Co updated the species checklist containing 56 taxon [excluding *S. cordata* Quisumb., the name however is accepted in the current checklist (Pelser et al. 2011 onwards)]. His unfinished manuscript laid the foundation of Co's Digital Flora of the Philippines (philippine-plants.org) (Barcelona et al. 2013), an updated checklist of Philippine vascular plants (Pelser et al. 2011 onwards). This online database currently recognizes 56 species of

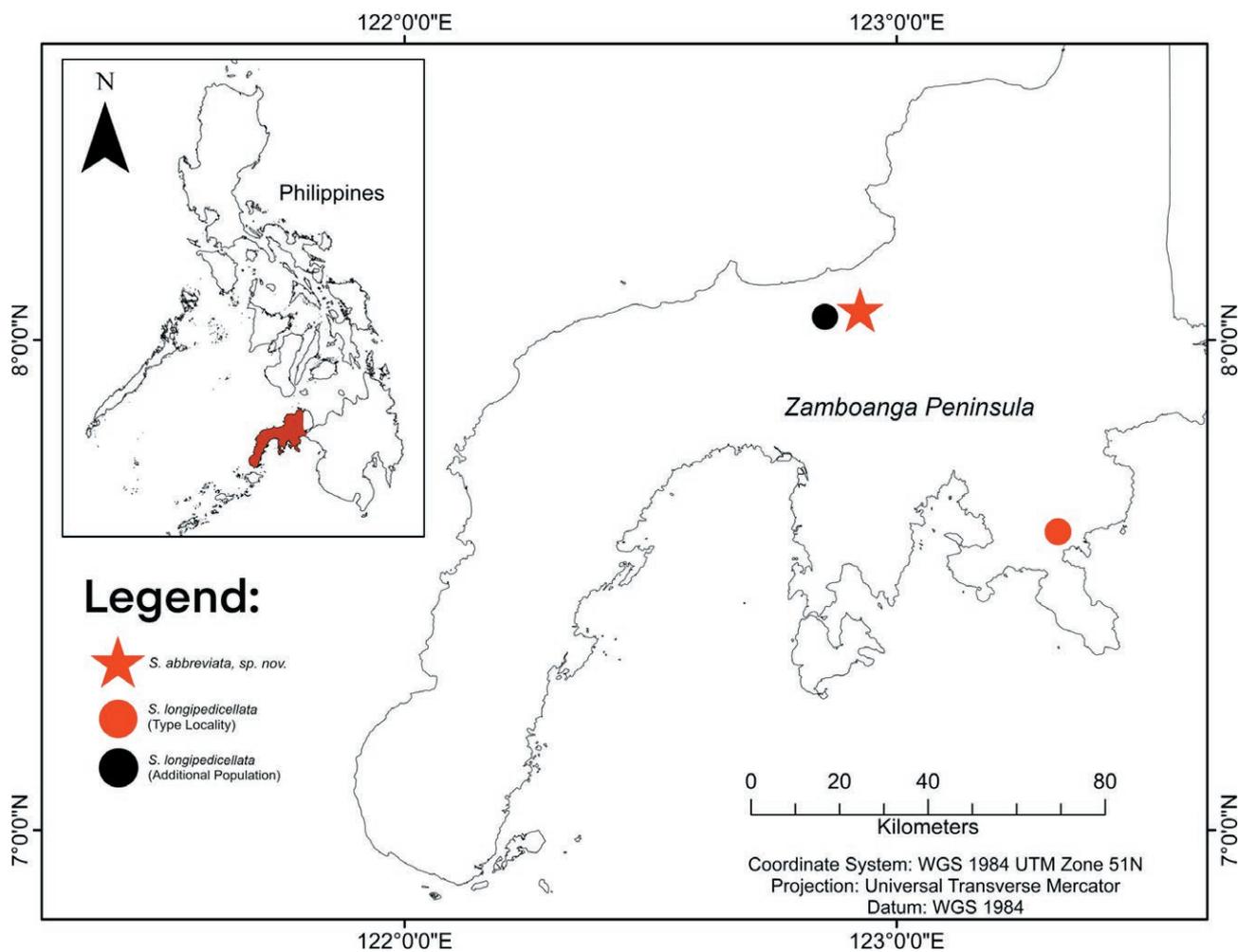


Figure 1. Map of Zamboanga peninsula showing the type locality of *S. abbreviata* denoted by (star); type locality of *S. longipedicellata* denoted by (red dot); additional population denoted by (black dot). Map created by Kean Roe Mazo.

Saurauia. There are currently 20 species recorded on the island of Mindanao.

The Zamboanga peninsula (Fig. 1) in Mindanao island comprises 3 provinces: Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, and Zamboanga Sibugay. This region is regarded as one of the cultural and ecological centers of the island. Historically, Zamboanga flora had been extensively studied through various expeditions in the 1900s. These expeditions generated specimens of a number of narrowly endemic species—many of which are yet to be rediscovered in the wild. Some noteworthy endemic plants are *Aeschynanthus zamboangensis* Kraenzl., *Begonia zamboangensis* Merr., *Cymboglossum zamboangense* (Ames) Ormerod & Cootes, and *Pandanus zamboangensis* Martelli.

During fieldwork in the Municipality of Leon B. Postigo in Zamboanga del Norte, the first author documented an interesting *Saurauia* species bearing small, few-flowered axillary cymes. The plant was initially identified as *S. lanaensis* Merr. because of its abaxially setose leaves and very short inflorescences. However, review of literature, comparison with protologues and herbarium specimens in JSTOR proved that the specimen represents an undescribed taxon. Thus, we here formally describe and name this new species as *Saurauia abbreviata* K.R.Mazo. This discovery is the latest addition to the genus after an 87-year gap in knowledge in studying this taxon of Actinidiaceae in the Philippines. It further raises the number of recognized endemic species of *Saurauia* in the country to 57. Moreover, *Saurauia longipedicellata* Merr. is also rediscovered almost a century since it was first described. Following the International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants (Turland et al. 2017) (ICN), we here assign a lectotype among its syntypes to stabilize this name. Photos, taxonomical and ecological notes, including an amended description, are also provided.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Initial description of the plants were done *in situ*. Further description was made using dried herbarium and spirit specimens. Botanical illustrations of the new species and *S. longipedicellata* were created from photographs of living plants and specimens preserved in spirit. Morphological comparisons to similar species were made using herbarium specimens. Images of type specimens deposited in JSTOR Global Plants (continuously updated) were likewise analyzed. All vegetative characters were observed and recorded in the field and reproductive characters were based on fresh and preserved

material. The amended description of *S. longipedicellata* was based on the original description and supplemented by the specimen vouchered by the first author. All specimens were vouchered using the Wildlife Gratuitous Permit: G.P. No. R-IX-03-2021 (New) granted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region IX. Herbaria abbreviations follow Thiers et al. 2020 (continuously updated).

TAXONOMIC TREATMENT

Saurauia abbreviata K.R.Mazo, **sp. nov.** (Figures 2, 3)

Type: Philippines: Mindanao: Zamboanga Del Norte Province, Municipality of Leon B. Postigo, Barangay Tinuyop, secondary lowland forest, 8° 4' 27" N, 122°56'25" E, ca. 331 masl elevation, 06 February 2021, KRM 0014 (holotype: PNH; isotype: CMUH).

Diagnosis

Saurauia abbreviata closely resembles *Saurauia lanaensis* Merr. by having densely setose branchlets, abaxially setose leaves, small, axillary, cymose inflorescence; setaceous sepals; short sepals and petals. However, the new species can be differentiated by having longer petioles (1.5–4.0 cm vs. 1.0–1.5 cm), uniformly setose adaxial leaf surface (vs. glabrous), longer and wider leaves (20–42 cm long × 9.5–17 cm wide vs. 11–20 cm long × 3.0–6.0 cm wide), more lateral veins (14–25 pairs vs. 10–12 pairs). In terms of floral characters, *S. lanaensis* has slightly larger petals and sepals vs. *S. abbreviata*. Notably, the older inflorescences in *S. abbreviata* forms a slightly thick woody rachis from which new flowers emerge after the senescence of the older ones—a characteristic not known to occur in *S. lanaensis*.

Description

Habit: small terrestrial tree, ca. 3.5 m high, 10–15 cm (diameter at breast height), bark color grayish to brown, lenticels sparse. Branchlets terete, brown-green, densely setose (hairs 0.5–3.7 mm) when old; larger setae lanceolate, antrorse, the smaller ones ciliate or reduced setae. Leaves alternate, simple, blade oblanceolate to obovate, chartaceous, 20–42 cm long × 9.5–17 cm wide, apex cuspidate, base sub-oblique to cuneate, margin entire, setae (1.0–2.0 mm) antrorse, curved, uniformly distributed on the margin; adaxial surface green, uniformly setose (hairs 1.5–2.7 mm long), setae thin, erect, pale green or brown, distributed on the midrib, veins, and reticulations; typically denser at the midrib; abaxial surface pale green, pubescent, ascending on the mid-

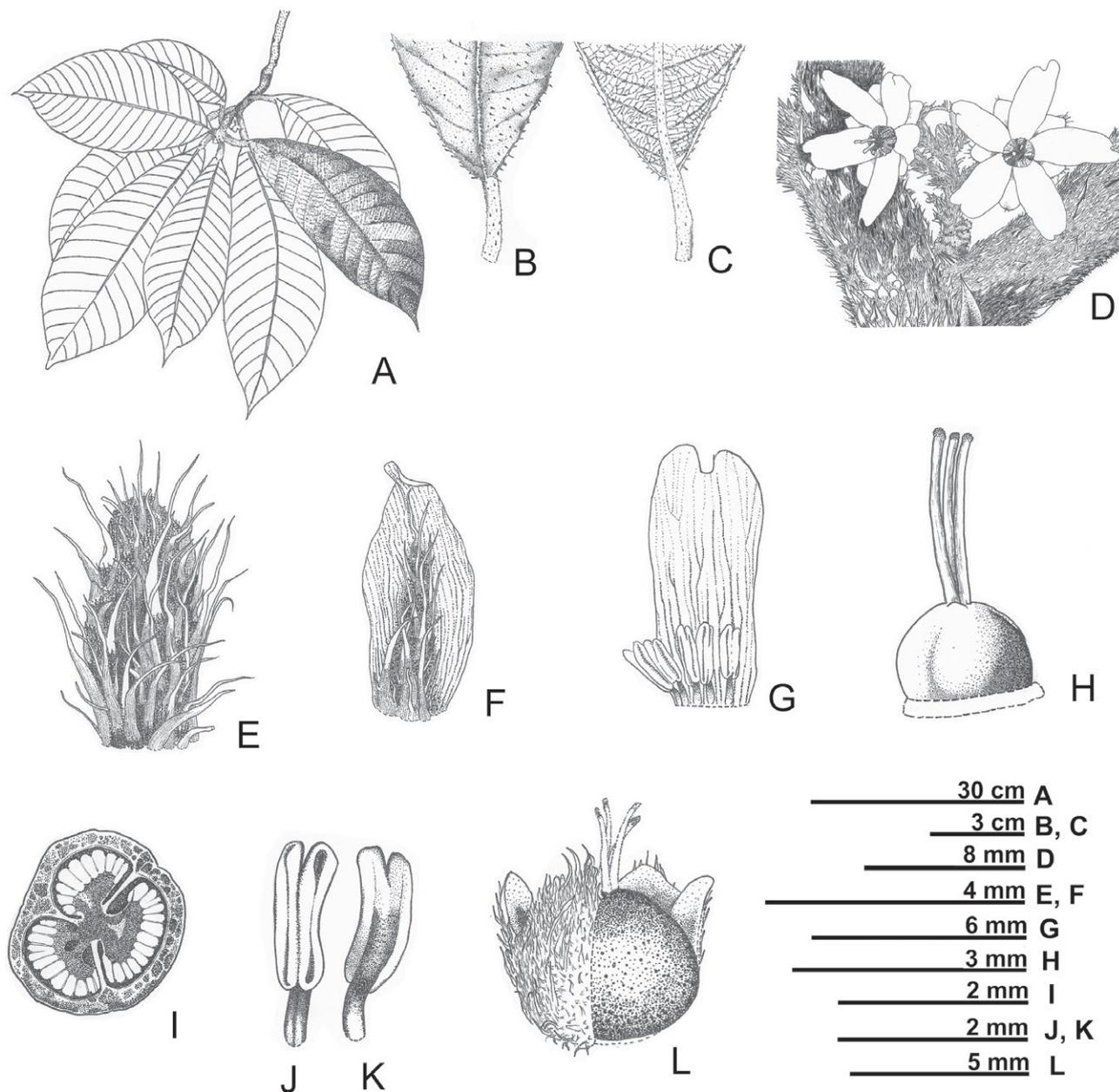


Figure 2. *Saurauia abbreviata* K.R.Mazo sp. nov. A. Habit; B. Leaf (adaxial view); C. Leaf (abaxial view); D. Inflorescence; E. Outer sepal; F. Inner sepal; G. Petal and stamens; H. Pistil; I. Cross section of the ovary; J. Stamen (anterior view); K. Stamen (posterior view); L. Fruit (remnant sepal removed). Illustrated by Jayson Mansibang.

rib, including the veins, and reticulations; midrib with sparse lanceolate setae with aristate tips, appressed, antrorse; lateral veins 14–25 pairs, reticulate veined, slightly arching and anastomosing towards leaf margin, secondary veins less prominent, slightly canaliculate adaxially, raised abaxially; submarginal veins 1.0–3.0 mm apart from the margin; petiole terete, green, 1.5–4.0 cm long \times 0.18–0.36 cm wide, densely setose (hairs

1–2.5 mm long), larger setae lanceolate with aristate tips, appressed, antrorse, smaller ones ciliate or reduced setae. Inflorescences short, axillary, solitary or short fascicle-cymose, 1.5–2.0 cm long, older inflorescence forms a short woody rachis, 5.0 mm long \times 3.0 mm wide, 3–5 flowered, lustrous white, few in anthesis at a time. Bracts 2, linear lanceolate, 2.5–3.0 mm long, both bracts and bracteoles densely setose (hairs 1.0–2.0 mm long), larger

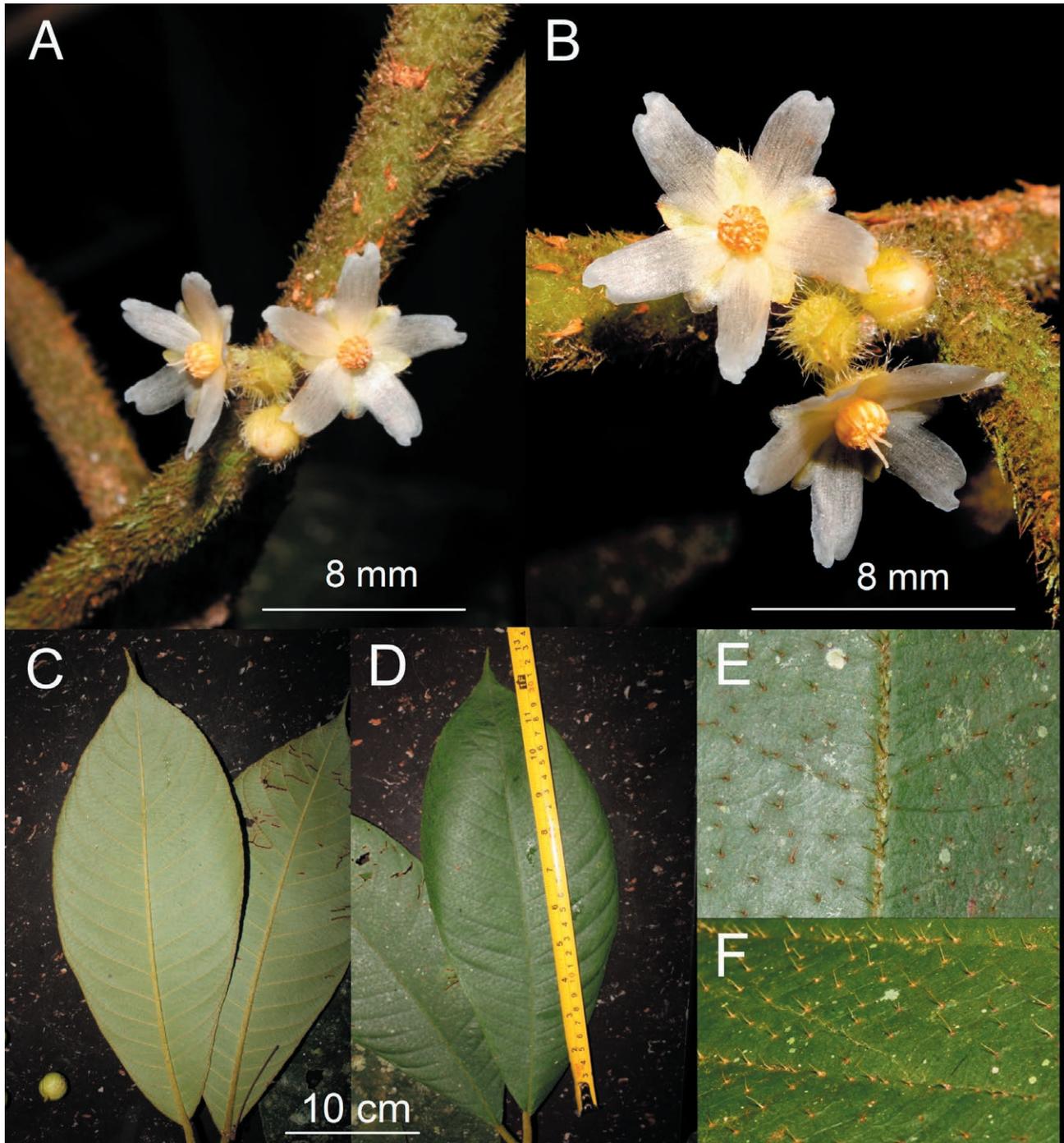


Figure 3. *Saurauia abbreviata*, sp. nov. A & B. Inflorescence; C. Leaf (abaxial view); D. Leaf (adaxial view); E. Abaxial leaf setae (close up); F. Adaxial leaf setae (close up). Photos by Kean Roe Mazo.

setae appressed, slenderly lanceolate with apiculate tips; peduncle 3.0–7.0 mm long, pale green, densely setose (hairs 0.5–1.0 mm long); bracteoles 2, linear lanceolate, 1.0–2.0 mm long, smaller than bracts. Pedicels 3.0–4.0 mm long, pale green, densely setose (hairs 0.5–1.0 mm

long). Sepals 5-merous, almost equal in size, pale green, entire, ovate-lanceolate, 3.5–4.0 mm long (excluding setae) × 2.0–2.5 mm wide, apex bluntly acute-obtuse, outer and inner sepals adaxially glabrous; outer sepals abaxially densely setose (hairs 0.5–3.0 mm throughout

the surface, larger setae slenderly lanceolate with apiculate tips; inner sepals abaxially densely setose but only at the median portion (glabrous at the margins). Petals 5-merous, lustrous white, narrowly oblong, 6.0 mm × 2.0–3.0 mm, apex notched, sinus 0.5–0.7 mm long, glabrous. Stamens 20–30, yellow, in two series, adnate to the corolla, filaments 0.5–0.6 mm long, glabrous; anthers 1.2–1.5 mm long × ca. 0.5 mm wide, oblong, dorsifixed, longitudinally dehiscent, apex divided into 2 lobes, 0.2–0.3 mm long, inner stamens slightly smaller than outer one. Ovary ca. 2.0 mm long × 2.0–3.2 mm wide, globose, glabrous, pale green-white; locules 3(–4), placentation axile, ovules numerous. Styles 2.5–2.7 mm long, 3(–4), filiform, terete, pale green-white, united at the base for 0.1–0.2 mm, upper arms free, stigma capitate, minutely corniculate. Fruits a berry, globose, glabrous, dark olive-green, 4.0–5.0 mm long × 5.0–7.0 mm wide (styles excluded), solitary or a few per infructescence, styles caducous or nearly so, sepals persistent at base, apically splitting. Seeds black, numerous, not embedded on mucilaginous matrix.

Etymology

The specific epithet *abbreviata* is derived from the Latin word “*brevis*” (short) in reference to the very short or shortened inflorescences and flower dimensions of the new species—character combinations which are very rarely observed among Philippine *Saurauia* species.

Distribution and Habitat

Saurauia abbreviata is only known from the type locality, inhabiting secondary tropical lowland evergreen rainforest at ca. 331 masl composed of trees such as *Shorea contorta* S.Vidal, *S. squamata* (Turcz.) Benth. & Hook. with epiphytes such as *Freycinetia* Gaudich. species. The understory comprises *Zingiber* Boehm. sp., *Syzygium angulatum* (C.B.Rob.) Merr., and weak herbs including *Alocasia sanderiana* W. Bull, *Begonia oblongata* Merr., and *Elatostema zamboangense* Merr. All individuals were observed growing near streams, in partially to fully shaded areas.

Phenology

Flowering from July to August; fruiting from January to February.

Proposed Conservation Status

There were only around 20–30 individuals seen in the type locality, along the stream. There is an adjacent forested area, but it has not yet been fully explored. Considering the sampling limitations and the lack of con-

crete data to establish a putative assessment, we propose it to be listed under the Data Deficient (DD) category (IUCN Standards and Petitions Committee 2019).

Notes

S. abbreviata bears some similar characters to *S. bakeri* Merr. and *S. clementis* Merr. in terms of its dense indumentum in its branchlets, abaxial lamina, inflorescence, sepals, and locule-style number (*S. clementis* also has a uniformly distributed setae on its adaxial surface). However, both *S. bakeri* and *S. clementis* are clearly distinct from *S. abbreviata* by bearing smaller leaves, fewer lateral nerves, distinctly long peduncled inflorescence, and larger flowers. Likewise, the new species is somewhat close to *S. elmeri* Merr. by its much-reduced inflorescence, however the leaf and flower characters of the new species cannot be mistaken.

The knowledge gap, not only about the Zamboanga region but also the Philippine flora, is not yet fully resolved and many genera still need urgent taxonomic attention. Majority are still only known from one or two collections (including *S. lanaensis*). Amending the description and finding the type population is integral to this step. Unfortunately, threat of habitat destruction, armed conflict, and climate change hinders conservation and taxonomic efforts. The habitat of the new species is likewise within the ancestral land of the indigenous people in Zamboanga. The Subanen people call *S. abbreviata* ‘*himag-puti*’ and is traditionally used as an ointment for wounds along with other *Saurauia* species found in the type locality.

Rediscovery and lectotypification of *Saurauia longipedicellata* Merr.

Saurauia longipedicellata Merr. is rediscovered after almost a century from the forest of the Municipality of Leon B. Postigo, growing sympatrically with *S. abbreviata* sp. nov. As part of the study towards a revision and improving the species definition of Philippine *Saurauia*, an amended description of the species is provided here. Moreover, no holotype had been assigned in the protologue of *S. longipedicellata*. Thus, we assume that all extant specimens bearing the collection BS 36897 Ramos & Edaña are syntypes. The specimen deposited at K in our opinion matches the current circumscription of this species and best represents this taxon. We therefore assign it as the lectotype following the ICN (Turland et al. 2017). The specimen from K shows consistent diagnostic characters with respect to the rediscovered population as vouchered by KRFM (*KRM 0016*) and the original description (i.e. glabrous branchlets and leaves,

axillary and cauline positioned inflorescences with very long pedicels). All the remaining extant specimens with the same collection number of this species are therefore treated as isolectotypes.

Saurauia longipedicellata Merr., Philipp. J. Sci. 20, 1922: 407 (Figures 4, 5).

Type: Malangas, Zamboanga Sibugay, Mindanao, Philippines, in forest along streams at low altitudes, November 1919. BS 36897 Ramos & Edaño. Lectotype here designated: K000761737! (Fig. 6); isolectotype: US1264759!.

Description

Habit small tree, ca. 7 m high, 8.8 cm (diameter at breast height), bark color rufous brown-beige. Branchlets terete, about 5.0 mm in diameter, green when young, brown when old, entirely glabrous with sparse minute warts and scales on branchlets. Leaves alternate, simple; blade oblanceolate, chartaceous-subcoriaceous, 11–20 cm long \times 4.0–5.5 cm wide, apex rather abruptly and shortly acuminate, base cuneate, sub-oblique, margin entire from the base to the lower half or upper two-thirds, the upper half or a third to the apex denticulate; brown when dry, slightly shiny, adaxial surface green, entirely glabrous or with sparse minute warts at the midrib; abaxial surface pale, glabrous with sparse minute warts and scales on the midrib, lateral veins, and reticulations; lateral veins pinnate, (14–16 pairs), abruptly curved and ascending, raised abaxially; secondary veins less prominent, slightly canaliculate adaxially. Inflorescences axillary or cauliflorous, fascicled, 1.0–1.8 cm wide, on the trunk and larger branches, few flowers in anthesis at a time; each pedicel is attached to a lignified tubercle, individual rachis 2.6 mm long \times 2.0 mm wide with pairs of linear-triangular scales subtending the pedicel attachment (scales 0.6–0.8 mm long \times 0.5–1.0 mm wide). Bracts 2, lanceolate, 1.0–3.0 mm long \times 0.6 mm wide, located at or near the middle of the pedicel, glabrous, appressed to the pedicel. Pedicels glabrous, terete, red-pink, slender, (3–)4–5 cm long. Sepals 5-merous, pinkish white; outer 2 sepals elliptic-ovate, 2.0–3.5 mm long \times 1.78–2.0 mm wide, glabrous on both surface; inner sepals petaloid, quite rigid only at the median portion, orbicular-elliptic, 4.0–5.0 mm long \times 3.7–5.0 mm wide, broadly rounded, glabrous on both surfaces. Petals 5-merous, pinkish, broadly oblong, 7–8 mm long \times 4–6 mm wide, entire, apex notched, sinus 1.4–2.0 mm long, glabrous on both surfaces. Stamens 15–20, in one series, adnate to the corolla; filaments 2.0–2.3 mm long, glabrous; anthers 1.9–2.5 mm

long \times 0.7–1.2 mm wide, oblong, dorsifixed, longitudinally dehiscent, apex divided into 2 lobes, 0.2–0.4 mm long. Ovary globose, glabrous, white, 1.6 mm long \times 2.2 mm wide; locules 3(–4), placentation axile, ovules many. Styles (2.7–4.0 mm long) 3(–4), filiform, terete, white, united only at the point of attachment, upper arms free, stigma capitate, corniculate. Fruit berry, few per infructescence, globose-ovoid, glabrous, pink-white, ca. 9.0 mm long \times 6.0–9.0 mm wide (styles excluded); styles quite persistent or nearly so, sepals persistent at base, apically splitting. Seeds black, embedded in mucilaginous matrix, numerous.

Notes

S. longipedicellata is unique and strongly characterized by being entirely glabrous (Merrill 1922). The specific epithet pertains to its long pedicels—the strongest diagnostic characteristic of the taxon. However, upon closer examination, it appears that there are (very) sparse minute warts and/or scales present in localized areas of the plant (at least for the vouchered specimens). But these sparse minute warts or scales needs a magnifying tool to confirm presence and cannot be easily discerned especially in fresh specimens.

Notably, these sparse minute warts and scales present in localized areas of the plant may have been a derived character from the reduction of the setae. The sparse warts are more visible abaxially as compared adaxially on leaves. The pedicels of cauliflorous fascicle are attached to lignified tubercles. The outer sepals are thicker and more rigid compared to the inner sepals which are somewhat petaloid. The style and locule number is 3 (very rarely 4). Nevertheless, all other characters mentioned in the protologue especially that of the long pedicels of both the inflorescence and infructescence of *S. longipedicellata* is similar for the Zamboanga population.

S. longipedicellata was noted by Merrill (1922) to be closest to *S. trunciflora* Merr. However, *S. longipedicellata* can be readily differentiated by the absence of well-developed setae on the ultimate branchlets, fewer lateral veins (14–16 pairs vs. 15–20 pairs), inflorescence position (axillary and cauliflorous vs. strictly cauliflorous), and longer pedicels [(3–)4–5 cm long vs. 2–3.5 cm long].

Ecology

The newly rediscovered population of *S. longipedicellata* Merr. was found in the same locality as *S. abbreviata*, sp. nov. Merrill noted that the type population of this taxon was collected in Zamboanga, district of Malangas, lowland forest along streams. Similarly, the rediscovered population of *Saurauia* collected by the first author were

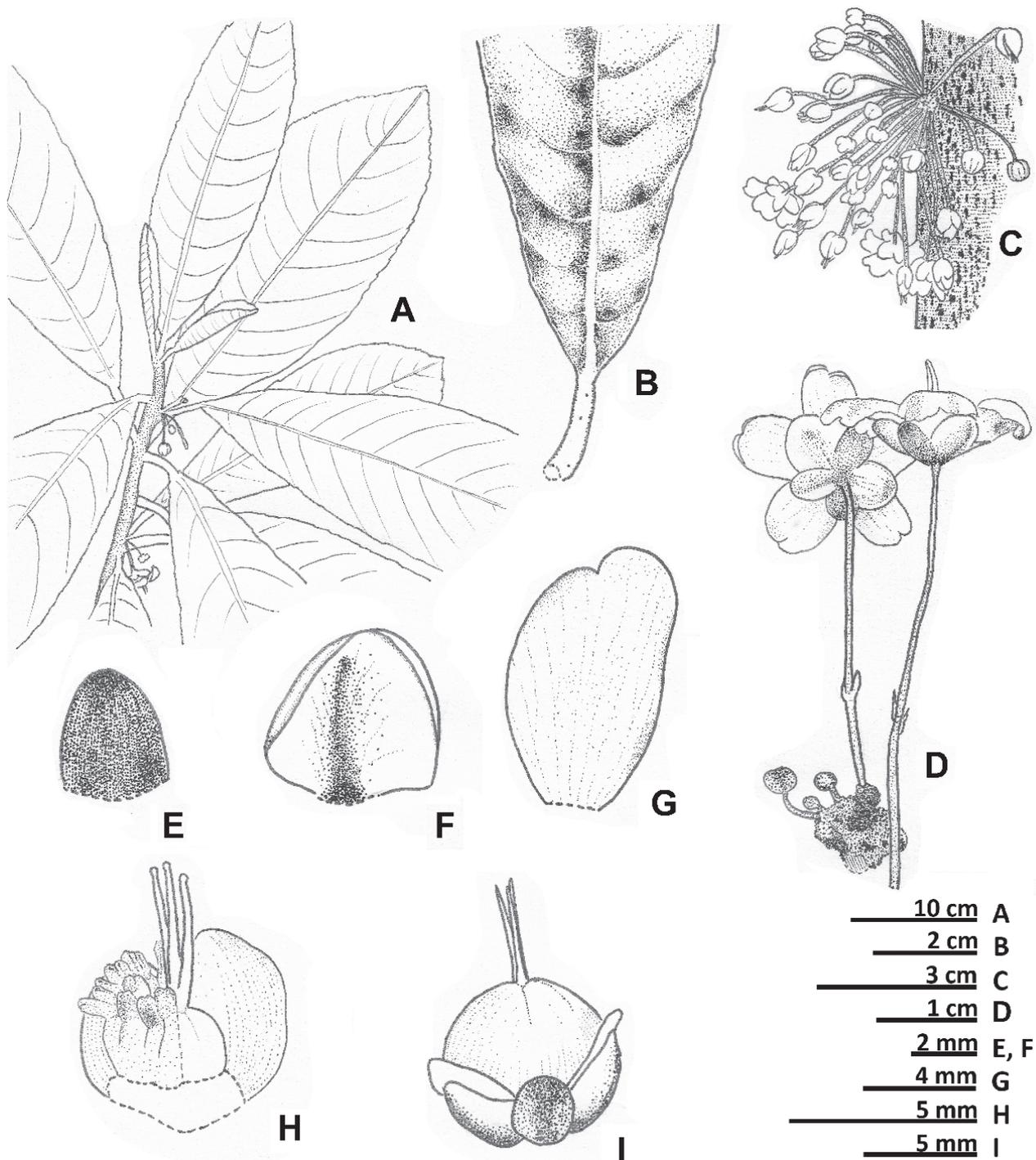


Figure 4. *Saurauia longipedicellata* Merr. A. Habit; B. Leaf (adaxial view); C. Cauliflorous inflorescence; D. Detail of the flower and tubercle; E. Outer sepal; F. Inner sepal; G. Petal; H. Flower (with portions of corolla and stamens removed). I. Fruit. Illustrated by Jayson Mansibang.

growing in the same ecological conditions, and it has been observed that all other species of *Saurauia* present in the area prefer the same habitat. At present the habitat preference and ecology of *Saurauia* species in the Philip-

pinas is not well understood. Thus, a comprehensive ecological study for *Saurauia* is recommended to aid future research in this poorly studied genus.

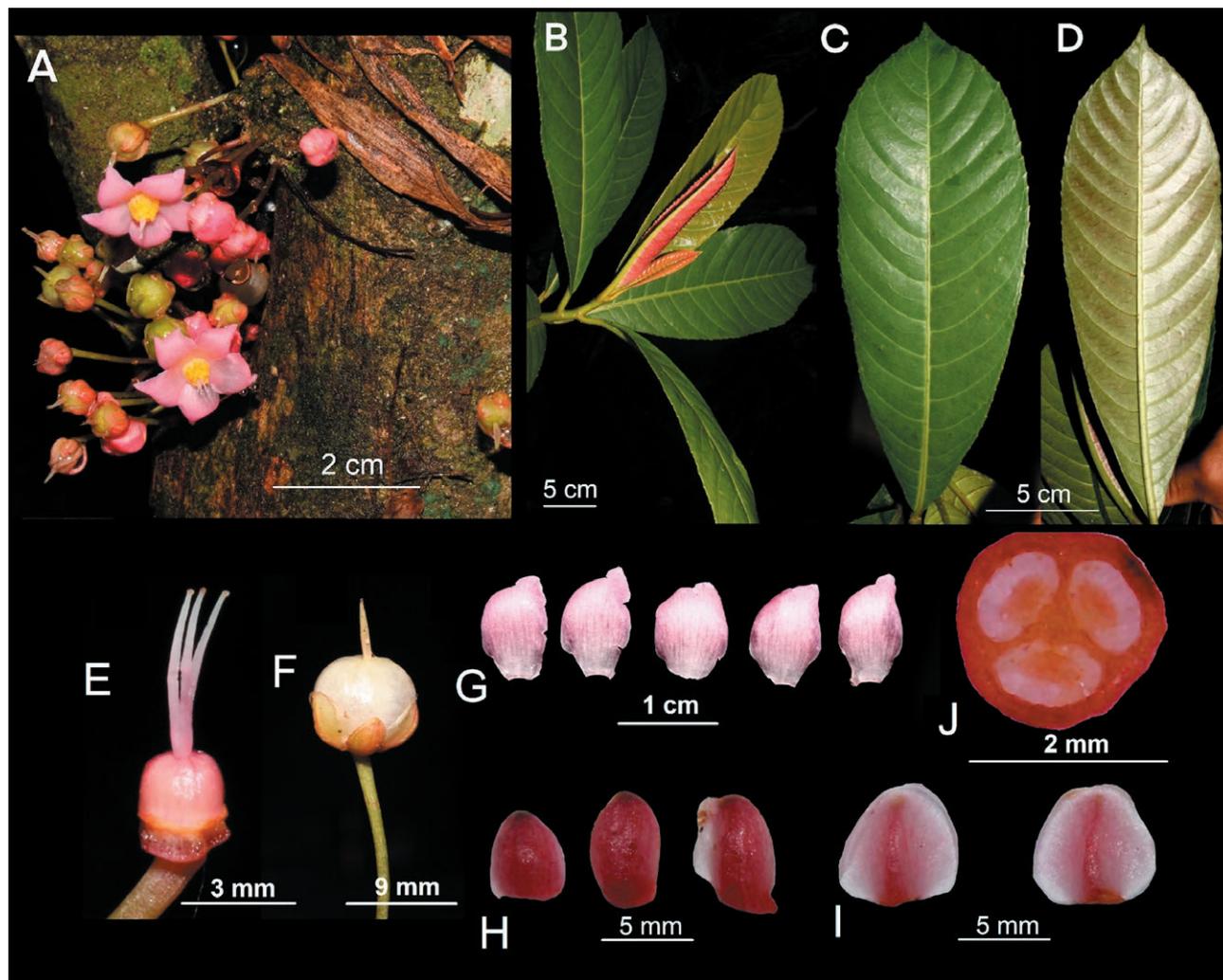


Figure 5. *Saurauia longipedicellata* Merr. A. Cauline inflorescence; B. Branchlet; C. Leaf (adaxial view); D. Leaf (abaxial view); E. Pistil (perianth removed); F. Fruit; G. Petals; H. External sepals; I. Internal sepals; J. Ovary cross-section. Photos by Kean Roe Mazo.

Proposed Conservation Status

Though endemic, the difficulty to conduct fieldwork in the areas of extant populations cannot confidently designate a putative conservation status of this species. We thus temporarily assign it as Data Deficient (DD) (IUCN Standards and Petitions Committee, 2019).

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Figure 6. Lectotype of *Saurauia longipedicellata* Merr. K000761737. Copyright of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (<http://specimens.kew.org/herbarium/K000761737>).

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