

Typification of plant name - illustration as lectotype, specimen as neotype, or lectotype + epitype?

Question

62 answers

Asked 6 years ago

I am doing some research on typifying a plant species and have encountered the following situation.

- The description is very old and no specimens were cited in the protologue.
- No extant specimens survive that would constitute "original material" as defined by article 9.3 of the IUCN.
- The protologue contains an illustration that could be selected as a lectotype, but it is not very detailed and could be variously interpreted as any of several species.
- There are also herbarium specimens of this species collected by the author himself, but years after the description was published, and thus could only be selected as neotypes because they cannot be considered "original material".

My options are the following:

- 1) Designate the drawing as a lectotype
- 2) Designate the specimen as a neotype
- 3) Simultaneously designate the drawing as a lectotype and the specimen as an epitype

I would prefer to select an actual specimen over an illustration which is more ambiguous, but the fact that the extant surviving specimen was collected after the species was published is problematic, and I am not sure if in all cases one should select "original material" over other alternatives that may otherwise be easier to interpret. There appears to be some precedence for option 3 above, but I am wondering what others would suggest in a situation such as the above.

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Answer

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