

Leaf dimorphy in *Ficus binnendijkii* and *Ficus maclellandii* (Moraceae) and the identity of the ornamental trees known under the name “*F. longifolia*”

CORNELIS C. BERG*

ABSTRACT. Leaf dimorphy in *Ficus binnendijkii* and *Ficus maclellandii*, the differences between these species and the identity of “*Ficus longifolia*” are discussed.

One of the taxa of *Ficus* commonly in cultivation outside the tropics as an indoor ornamental tree is one with linear-lanceolate laminas, mostly 10–25 x 1.5–3.5 cm, which is often sold under the name “Longifolia”. I was accustomed to identifying such plants as *Ficus binnendijkii* (Miq.) Miq., as in herbaria, such as Leiden (L), material largely matching “*Ficus longifolia*” is identified and filed under *F. binnendijkii*. Many of these identifications are those of Corner, who was probably familiar with the variation in leaf form of *F. binnendijkii* in the field in the Malay Peninsula. Notably, most such “longifolia” has smaller and broader, oblong to elliptic leaves than is normal in *F. binnendijkii*. As *F. binnendijkii* belongs to subg. *Urostigma* in which leaf dimorphy is unknown I have been concerned as to whether specimens with such distinct leaf forms could really belong to the same species. A recent visit to Thailand made clear to me that leaf dimorphy in subg. *Urostigma* does indeed occur. The trees I saw showing this phenomenon belonged to *Ficus maclellandii* King. In this species, leaves with narrow laminas and relatively long stipules were found on the lower branches, which branches apparently do not produce figs. Cuttings from such branches (which can be easily reached) apparently keep their narrow laminas and relatively long stipules and do not produced broader leaves later on. Such trees also remain largely sterile, with figs only occasionally produced.

Leaf dimorphy, illustrated in Fig. 1, is unusual in subg. *Urostigma*. This phenomenon and some other characters suggest that the *F. maclellandii* and *F. binnendijkii* are closely related. However, *F. binnendijkii* is entirely glabrous but in *F. maclellandii* at least the stipules are hairy: the density of the hairs varying from dense to occasional (only a few hairs at the base of the stipules or persisting on the upper scars of the stipules). All indoor ornamental narrow-leaved (“longifolia”) trees examined have some hairs at the base of the stipules which indicates that they belong to *F. maclellandii* and not to *F. binnendijkii*.

Ficus binnendijkii occurs in Malesia (Java, Borneo, Sumatra, and peninsular Malaysia) and extends to southernmost peninsular Thailand. *F. maclellandii* ranges from the foothills of the Himalayas and South China to Vietnam and through Thailand to northernmost peninsular Malaysia. Both species are treated in Flora Malesiana (Berg & Corner, 2005).

* Bergen Museum, University of Bergen, Allégate 41, 5007 Bergen, Norway/ Nationaal Herbarium Nederland, Leiden University Branch, P.O. Box 9514, 2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands.

REFERENCES

Berg C.C. & Corner, E.J.H. (2005). Moraceae (*Ficus*). Flora Malesiana 17(2): 1–730. Leiden.

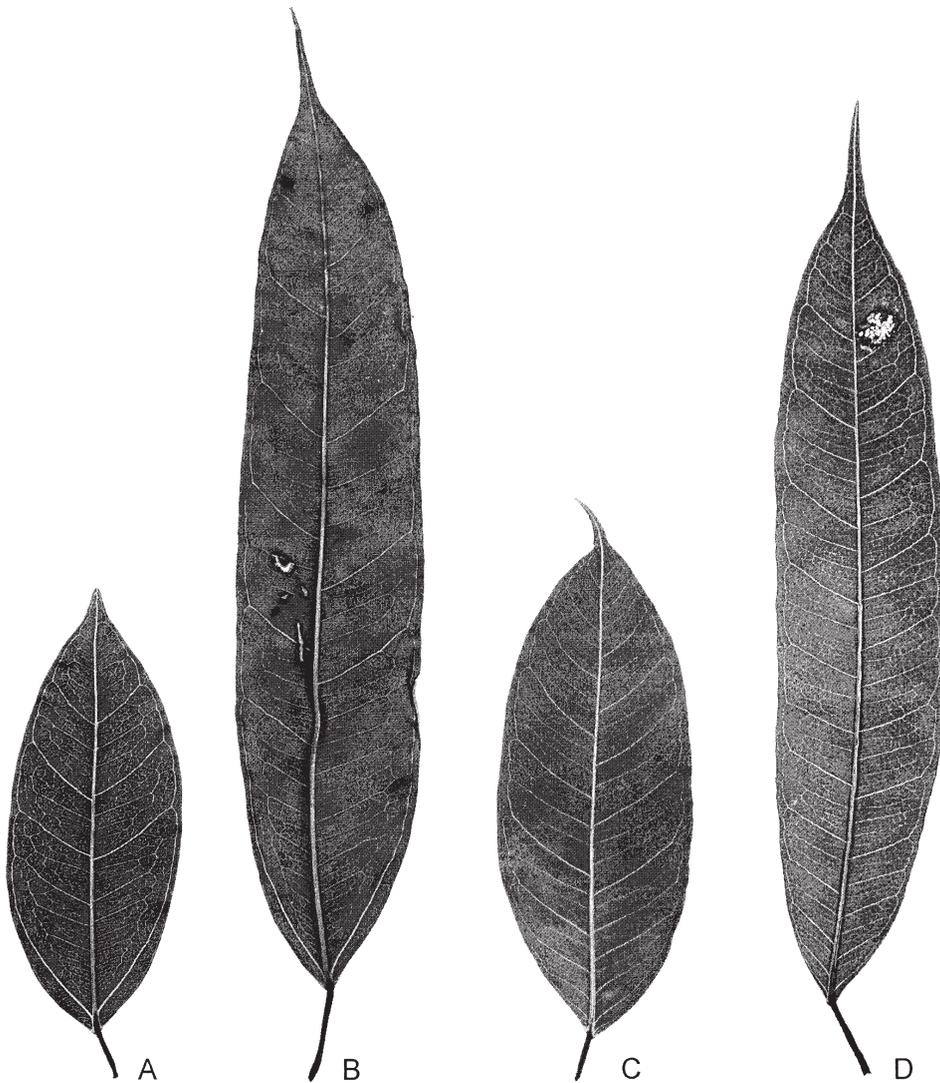


Figure 1. Leaf dimorphy. A and B. *Ficus binnendijkii*. A. from Corner in SFN 28641 (Singapore). B. from Dransfield 3238 (Sumatra). C and D. *F. maclellandii*. C. Berg s.n. (Thailand, Khon Kaen). D. from Berg s.n. (Thailand, Bangkok).