

Alas, no new species in genus *Cremnophila* !

The plant today known as *Cremnophila linguifolia* was described by Lemaire in 1863 as an *Echeveria* species. It was a plant of unknown origin cultivated in Belgium. 6 years later, in 1869, Baker completed Lemaire's description and stated that the plant was native of Mexico. For about 100 years it was never found in the wild and remained a mystery. Some authors even speculated that it might be of hybrid origin.

It was only in 1962 that Padre Hans Fittkau, visiting the ruins of Malinalco in the South of Toluca, happened to see it growing there. Later it was also found in the Barranca de Mexicarpa, 10 km east of Malinalco.

In 1968 Reid Moran published a full account of the rediscovery of *E. linguifolia* as well as a detailed description of the plant in Spanish language in *Cact Suc Mex* 13:67-70, based on plants collected on sheer north facing cliffs just SW of Malinalco and in the Barranca de Mexicarpa. 10 years later the same extensive description was also published in English language in *CSJ US* where Moran resurrected genus *Cremnophila* Rose to accommodate *Sedum cremnophila* and *Echeveria linguifolia*.

While plants of *E. linguifolia* in cultivation - all descending from the single clone brought to Europe some time before Lemaire described it - of course were almost not variable, plants collected in the wild at the two above mentioned localities display a remarkable variability : Leaves can be from as small as 4 x 2 cm to as big as 9 x 5.5 cm and - according to Moran - even inflorescences and flowers can differ from one plant to another.

Since its resurrection in 1978 genus *Cremnophila*, consisting of only two species, has remained unaltered. So it was no little surprise when in 2015 in *Cact Suc Mex* 60(1):19-28 a new species of *Cremnophila* was published. An in-depth study of the lengthy article (penned by Jerónimo Reyes Santiago, Avila Serratos Mauricio & Brachet Ize Christian) however soon revealed that we rejoiced too soon : The plant described and illustrated and named *Cremnophila tlahuicana* originates from the Barranca de Mexicarpa, that means from the very same locality as one of the two collections on which Moran based his description of *E. linguifolia*. While the list of references at the end of their article includes Moran's 1978 publication, it is obvious that they did not study it carefully, otherwise they would have learnt that the Barranca de Mexicarpa is not a new locality.

By means of a comparative table the three authors aim to distinguish their newly named plant from *C. linguifolia*. Wherefrom they had gathered the data for the latter is unclear, certainly not from Moran's description. Why they failed to consult it in view of the fact that a Spanish version is available, is incomprehensible. If they had done so they would have noted that their "new" plant clearly remains within the range of variability of *C. linguifolia* - as of course is to be expected of a plant collected at the same locality Paraphrasing William Shakespeare : Much ado about nothing

References :

- Moran R. 1968. *Echeveria linguaefolia* redescubierta. *Cact Suc Mex* **13**:67-70
- Moran R. 1978. Resurrection of *Cremnophila*. *CSJ US* **50**:139-146
- Reyes, Avila & Brachet 2015. Una nueva especie del género *Cremnophila* (Crassulaceae) en el Estado de México, México. *Cact Suc Mex* **60**(1):19-28