

## A NEW *LOTUS* SPECIES FROM GRAN CANARIA

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### SUMMARY

The name *Lotus leptophyllus* (Lowe) Larsen has been used erroneously for coastal populations on Gran Canaria. A new species *Lotus arinagensis* is established for these plants and *L. leptophyllus* is relegated to a synonym of *L. glaucus* var. *angustifolius*.

### RESUMEN

El nombre de *Lotus leptophyllus* (Lowe) Larsen, se ha venido usando erróneamente para ciertas poblaciones de la costa este de Gran Canaria. Una nueva especie, *Lotus arinagensis*, se describe en base a este material, quedando *L. leptophyllus* relegado como sinonimia de *L. glaucus* var. *angustifolius*.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1862 the Rev. Richard Thomas LOWE described a new species *Pedrosia leptophylla* "from the hills above Las Palmas". A second cleric, the Rev. R. P. MURRAY (1896), whose important exploration of the Canarian flora has never been fully documented, relegated *Pedrosia leptophylla* to a synonym of his own new taxon *Lotus glaucus* var. *angustifolius*. Examination of the type specimen of *Pedrosia leptophylla* Lowe in the Herbarium of the Natural History Museum, London (BM), Fig. 1, and of Murray's taxon show that they both refer to the same species.

However, LARSEN (1960) erroneously used the epithet *leptophylla* for a

second *Lotus* species found in coastal areas of Gran Canaria to the South of Las Palmas and made the new combination *Lotus leptophyllus* (Lowe) Larsen, a name which has since been used for this second species particularly for the population at Arinaga on the S.E. coast of the island.

The type specimen of *Pedrosia leptophylla* undoubtedly corresponds to the common form of *Lotus glaucus* which still occurs abundantly on the dry slopes of N. and E. Gran Canaria away from the immediate coastal habitat and is not conspecific with the coastal taxon which is found between Melenara and Arinaga. This species, therefore, remains undescribed though it is well illustrated under the name *Lotus leptophyllus* in KUNKEL (1978), Fig. 2, and in BRAMWELL & BRAMWELL (1990). It differs from *L. glaucus* in its prostrate habit, subsessile, white-tomentose leaves and 2 to 4-flowered inflorescences and particularly in its horizontal, alternately branching stems. It must be treated as a new species and is here given the name *Lotus arinagensis* sp. nov.

#### 79.- *Lotus arinagensis* Bramwell, sp. nov.

*A Lotus glaucus Aiton habitu repentis horizontali foliis albotomentosus vel albovillosis subsessilibus inflorescentiis 2-4 floribus differt.*

HOLOTYPE: Gran Canaria, Puerto de Arinaga, junto al muelle. *Legit.* J. Alonso Socorro 13-3-1974. *In Herb. Hort. Bot. "Viera y Clavijo", Canaria Magna (LPA) no. 10125 servatus.*

Low-growing perennial; the older plants woody at the base. Rootstock reddish brown. Stems prostrate, horizontal, up to 50 cm long, densely white tomentose, the lateral branches alternate with internodes of (0.3) 0.5-1.2 cm. Leaves trifoliate, subsessile or sessile with leaflet-like stipules which are sometimes absent. Leaflets variable, oblanceolate, obovate or suborbicular, somewhat fleshy, white tomentose or villous, 0.2-0.5 cm long, acute or obtuse; the upper surface depressed or concave; the rachis grooved.

Flowers usually in groups of 2 to 4 per peduncle, occasionally solitary. Peduncles long, 0.5 to 1.5 cm, tomentose. Calyx campanulate to infundibuliform, light brown or green, pilose, 0.5 to 0.6 cm long; the acute upper teeth longer than the lower. Corolla yellow, 0.8-1.5 cm long; the standard usually erect. Legume cylindrical, dark brown or blackish, 2-3 cm. long, slightly constricted between the seeds. Seeds round, blackish-brown.

DISTRIBUTION: Gran Canaria, rare in sandy habitats and amongst stones on the East coast of the island between Melenara and Arinaga 20-50 m a.s.l. Figures: KUNKEL & KUNKEL (1978), "Flora de Gran Canaria" 2: fig. 74 (see Fig. 2); BRAMWELL & BRAMWELL (1990), "Flores silvestres de las islas Canarias" p. 155, both as *L. leptophyllus*.



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Figura 1.- Type of *Pedrosia leptophylla* Lowe

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74 - *Lotus leptophyllus* - Mata pardaFigura 2.- *Lotus arinagensis* sp. nov.