Maesa camptobotrys (Primulaceae) is *Sabia pauciflora* (Sabiaceae), not *Discocalyx* (Primulaceae)

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Summary. The type specimen of *Maesa camptobotrys* is re-examined and morphology and characters are discussed. The specimen is a member of the genus *Sabia* (Sabiaceae) rather than the genus *Discocalyx* (Primulaceae) into which it was transferred; the name is formally placed as a synonym of *Sabia pauciflora*.

Key Words. identification, New Guinea, synonym, taxonomy.

There are several tropical dicot genera with small, somewhat inconspicuous flowers that are commonly mis-identified, sometimes with taxonomic consequences. In South-East Asia, such groups include the Icacinaceae (especially in the old sense including the Stemonuraceae and Cardiopteridaceae), Celastraceae (especially the genus *Perrottetia* Kunth now placed in the Dipentodontaceae) and several genera in the Primulaceae, especially *Maesa* and *Embelia* (which often get mis-identified as each other despite a different ovary position). This report is to clarify the identity and status of the name *Maesa camptobotrys* K.Schum.

The genus *Maesa* Forssk. (Primulaceae-Maesioideae) consists of c. 150 species of scramblers, shrubs and small trees distributed throughout the Old World tropics (Utteridge 2012). *Maesa* flowers are comparatively small (c. 0.5 – 1 cm in diam.) and are subtended by two subopposite or alternately arranged bracteoles and each flower contains a single carpel with a semi-inferior, unilocular ovary (see Utteridge & Saunders 2001). Schumann (in Schumann & Lauterbach 1905: 341) described *M. camptobotrys* K.Schum. based on a single Schlechter collection from the Torricelli Mountains in the Sepik region of Papua New Guinea, noting that it was similar to *M. ramentacea* (Roxb.) A.DC. but differed in the more petite habit and the few-branched panicles.

Sleumer (1987: 65) excluded the species from *Maesa* based on venation, specifically the lateral nerves coming straight from the midrib and the camptodromous arrangement, noting that the species “...possibly belongs to *Discocalyx*, to be decided on in a later paper.” *Discocalyx* Mez is a small genus in the Primulaceae-Myrsinoideae found in eastern Malesia through to the Pacific. Diagnostic characters include the unisexual flowers (plant dioecious), petals fused at

the base, a superior ovary with a very short style with a peltate stigma; these are in addition to the Primulaceae characters, *inter alia*, of black or brownish glandular dots throughout all parts (including in the calyx lobes, petals, stamens etc.), stamens opposite the petals, and a unilocular ovary with a free central placenta. Subsequently, Sleumer (1988: 89) formally transferred the name to *Discocalyx* “with doubt” probably based on the ovary with a short style – he gave no detailed notes to explain this decision but did provide a detailed description of the specimen.

As part of an ongoing revision of the genus *Maesa* in New Guinea, the type of *M. camptobotrys* was re-examined by the author. The specimen does not resemble any taxa in the Primulaceae-Myrsinoideae and especially does not have a semi-inferior ovary as in *Maesa*, and also clearly has fully formed stamens and ovary, unlike the unisexual flowers of *Discocalyx* which would have a rudimentary pistillode, or with pistillode absent, in staminate flowers. The habit is clearly scandent (as noted by Sleumer), with very distinct subangular, yellowish stems not found in *Discocalyx* (or any other genera in the family). The inflorescence is a lax cyme with usually 1 (– 3) bract(s) subtending the flowers immediately below the pedicels. The specimen has five petals which are inflexed at the apex, and, most especially, fully developed stamens with flattened filaments and inflexed anthers attached. The flowers also have fully developed ovaries, i.e. the flowers are bisexual, and in his comprehensive description, Sleumer described the ovary as “seemingly 2-locular, in fact 1-locular with 4 (or 5?) ovules on a basal/central placenta”; the specimen is 2-locular rather than 1-locular as found in Primulaceae.

All of the characters, especially the habit, the yellow, ridged stems, leaf venation, bisexual flowers with inflexed petals and anthers, and the 2-locular ovary are

diagnostic of the genus *Sabia* Colebr. (Sabiaceae). The inflorescence bracts were interpreted, no doubt, by Schumann as the bracteoles found in *Maesa*; in *Sabia*, however, the number of bracts varies between flowers, some flowers may not be subtended by a bract and this is found in the specimen of *M. camptobotrys* where some of the flowers do not have a subtending bract. In *Sabia*, the arrangement of the stamens is similar to Primulaceae being opposite the petals and can be adherent to the base of the petals, but the flattened stamens and inflexed anthers, and the absence of any brown or black glandular dots in any part of the flowers, preclude the placement of this specimen in any Myrsinoideae taxa.

The specimen is *Sabia pauciflora* Blume, a species found in eastern Malesia (van Beusekom & van der Water 1989; see also illustration in Miquel 1871: t. 32); *Discocalyx camptobotrys* is formally placed as a synonym of *S. pauciflora* here.

Taxonomy

Sabia pauciflora Blume (1851: 370). Type: Indonesia, Moluccas, without date or collector (holotype L 0013991-image seen!).

= *Maesa camptobotrys* K.Schum (in Schumann & Lauterbach 1905: 341) ≡ *Discocalyx camptobotrys* (K.Schum.) Sleumer (1988: 89) Type: [Papua New Guinea] Torricelli Mts, 1000 m, April 1902 (fl.), *Schlechter* 14356 (lectotype K000756300! selected here; isoelectotypes: B lost, L [0005671 fragm. ex WRS�]-digital image seen!, WRS�-image seen!), **synon. nov.**

NOTES. The specimen of *Sabia pauciflora* identified as the type at L is the only specimen with the annotation of the species name by Blume and is clearly annotated as “Unicum!” on the label, i.e. a single specimen, and thus can be considered the holotype of *S. pauciflora* (following the guidelines in McNeill 2014). There are three remaining specimens of *Schlechter* 14356: the specimens at K and WRS� are complete branches with inflorescences, and the L specimen is a fragment from the WRS� specimen as well as a photocopy of the WRS� specimen. The K specimen is selected here as the lectotype as it is more complete having several inflorescences with flowers at varying stages and is also stamped as seen by Sleumer in 1986; the WRS� specimen only has a single inflorescence and neither of the WRS� and L specimens are stamped or annotated by Sleumer.

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