

## *A New Name to the Canarian Peralillo Tree*

By Per Sunding\*

### Resumen

Se presenta y discuta el nuevo nombre **Maytenus canariensis**, propuesto en Kunkel (1971) para el "Peralillo" (*Catha cassinoides*).

### Summary

The name **Maytenus canariensis** (Loes.) Kunkel et Sunding is proposed for the Canarian endemic currently known as **Catha cassinoides** (L'Hér.) Webb. The new name has been presented in Kunkel (1971), without commentary.

In four of the Canary Islands (La Palma, Tenerife, Gran Canaria, and Fuerteventura) a small tree of the family Celastraceae is sometimes met with. By the native population the tree, which is a Canarian endemic, is known as *peralillo* (or *peradillo*, *peralito*); in the botanical literature on the islands it has normally been named *Catha cassinoides* (L'Hér.) Webb (Pitard & Proust 1908, Ceballos & Ortuño 1951, Lems 1960). L'Héritier (1789) first described the species as *Calastrus cassinoides*; later it has been referred to the genus *Catha* (by Webb in Webb & Berthelot 1836-50) and *Gymnosporia* (Masferrer 1881).

In 1942 the family Celastraceae was monographed by Loesener, who considered *Catha* a monotypic genus, with the single African species *C. edulis* Forssk. The Canarian taxon together with a related taxon from Madeira (see below) were transferred to *Maytenus*. Loesener's generic delimita-

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tion has been followed in most of the later taxonomic literature (see for instance Hou 1955, Melchior 1964, Airy Shaw 1966, Raju & Babu 1968, and Tutin et al. 1968). In the recent checklist of the vascular flora of Madeira (Hansen 1969) the Madeiran plant has also been referred to the genus *Maytenus*. The name to be applied to the Canarian plant has, however, not yet become established.

Loesener (1942) considered the Madeiran *Maytenus dryandri* (Lowe) Loes. and the Canarian taxon to be conspecific and gave the Canarian plant rank as a variety under the former: *M. dryandri* var. *canariensis* Loes. It seems, however, more correct to consider the two to be distinct enough to deserve specific status (evident differences in inflorescences, leaf shapes, etc., see also Lowe 1868), and the question thus arises about which name one should apply to the Canarian plant. The name *Maytenus cassinoides* could unfortunately not be used, because of an older homonym *Maytenus cassinoides* Urban, used to designate a plant from the Westindies (basionym *Rhamnus cassinoides* Lam). As no other epithet on the specific level has been used for the taxon, it is here proposed to choose Loesener's epithet for what he considered a variety, which makes the following new combination necessary:

***Maytenus canariensis*** (Loes.) Kunkel et Sunding **comb. nov.**  
in Kunkel Cuad. Bot. Canar., Supl. 2:62 (1971).

*Maytenus dryandri* (Lowe) Loesener var. *canariensis*  
Loesener, Nat. Pflanzenfam., 2. Aufl., 20 b, p. 140  
(1942).

Syn.: *Celastrus cassinoides* L'Hér., Sert. Angl. 1,  
p. 6 (1789).

*Gymnosporia cassinoides* (L'Hér). Masferrer, Anal. Socied. Españ. Hist. Nat. 10, p. 176 (1881).

*Catha cassinoides* (L'Hér.) Webb in Webb et Berth. Phytogr. Canar. 2, p. 142 (1842).

*Non Maytenus cassinoides* (Lam.) Urban, Symb. Antill.  
5, p. 58 (1904).

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