



Typification of the generic name *Sasamorpha*

Chris Stapleton¹

Summary. Clarification of the definition of a generitype from the Sydney Code onwards shows that previous citations of generitypes for *Sasamorpha* were only the name considered correct for the 'type species'. *S. purpurascens* was actually the first name designated as the generitype, for which *S. borealis* is currently considered the correct name.

The genus *Sasamorpha* was first described by Nakai (J. Fac. Agric. Hokkaido Univ. 26: 180. 1931), who transferred two Japanese bamboos to it as *Sasamorpha borealis* (Hackel) Nakai and *Sasamorpha purpurascens* (Hackel) Nakai. McClure (Taxon 6: 208. 1957) pointed out that, although no type was given, most of the protologue concerned *S. borealis* with *S. purpurascens* only mentioned in a note at the end. However, Nakai (Bot. Mag. Tokyo 46: 41. 1932) had subsequently reduced *S. borealis* to a variety of *S. purpurascens*, and McClure (l.c.) interpreted this new species circumscription as a designation of *S. purpurascens* as type, even though no mention was made of typification in Nakai (l.c. 1932). McClure (l.c.) even gave the later publication (Nakai l.c. 1932), with the broadened circumscription, as the place of publication of *S. purpurascens*.

McClure later reported (Taxon 8: 209. 1959) that he had been in error in 1957 in following Nakai's circumscription of the species, as Matsumura (Index Pl. Jap. 2: 96. 1905) had previously reduced *S. purpurascens* to a variety of *S. borealis*, when treating them as a single species of *Sasa*. The two basionyms, *Arundinaria purpurascens* and *Bambusa borealis* were published simultaneously by Hackel (Bull. Herb. Boiss. 7: 716 & 720. 1899), and so Matsumura (l.c.) had clearly established priority (Art. 11.5, *St. Louis Code*, Greuter & al., *Regnum veg.* 138. 2000). McClure (l.c. 1959) proceeded to alter the generic type to what he then considered the correct name, *S. borealis*, and this name is still cited as the generitype (e.g., *Index Nom. Gen.* 3, *Regnum Veg.* 102: 1559. 1979; NCU-3, *Regnum veg.* 129: 1018. 1993).

¹ Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB, UK. E-mail: c.stapleton@rbgkew.org.uk

The reason for these errors may well have been the poor definition of a generic type at that time, with confusion between the name of the “type species” and the correct name for that species. Following the more precise definition in recent Codes of the type of a generic name as the type of a species name, it is apparent that both designations given by McClure were misguided, although by incorrectly citing *Sasa purpurascens* as the generic type designated by Nakai, McClure (l.c. 1957) effectively designated that name as lectotype of *Sasamorpha* himself (Art. 9.8, Greuter & al. l.c.). This first choice of a species name as representative of the type of the generic name *Sasamorpha* must now stand, and his later correction of the type to *S. borealis* is not acceptable, although it should be noted that current taxonomic opinion assigns both names to a single species for which *S. borealis* is the correct name. Both these species names are themselves typified. The type of *S. purpurascens*, and hence of *Sasamorpha*, is *Faurie 13131* from the Hayachine Mountains, Japan. It was described by Hackel from Faurie’s collections, then in Aomori, Japan, but it is not clear where the holotype or any isotypes are now to be found.

>> Chris: I wonder if a slight rephrasing would be clearer:
>>previous citations of generitypes for *Sasamorpha* represented not
>> the type but rather the name considered correct for the ‘type
>> species’. John

John - Yes, thanks, that is better, but I would prefer ‘not the type
> but rather names considered correct’, in the plural. Chris
>