

A new species of *Scleria* (Cyperaceae) from New Caledonia

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Summary : *Scleria ovinux*, an endemic species of New Caledonia that was discovered and named but undescribed and unpublished by Jean RAYNAL, is here validly published.

Résumé : *Scleria ovinux*, espèce endémique de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, découverte et nommée, mais non décrite ni publiée par Jean RAYNAL, est ici validement publiée.

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During routine identification of Pacific Islands plant specimens, a *Scleria* specimen was matched by a New Caledonia specimen annotated by Jean RAYNAL as *Scleria ovinux* Raynal. I found that the name seemed to be unpublished. Time passed and the specimen disappeared into my backlog. However, I remembered it as very distinctive and was curious that the name could not be found. With the help of a promising young French botanist, Mlle Anne-Elizabeth WOLF, I contacted RAYNAL's widow, Mme Aline RAYNAL-ROQUES, and found that apparently Dr. RAYNAL had annotated sheets in herbaria, but had never prepared a description or published the name.

M^{me} RAYNAL, herself a botanist working on African plants, informed me that she had no intention of publishing this species, but did not object to my publishing it, ascribing the name to Jean RAYNAL.

M^{lle} WOLF located a series of *Scleria* specimens in the Paris herbarium bearing annotations as "*Scleria ovinux* Raynal" and these were loaned to the Smithsonian for my study. They are distinct from *S. polycarpa* Boeckeler and *S. margaritifera* Willd., where some had been placed. They do not key to any species in recent treatments of *Cyperaceae* by KERN or KOYAMA in the western Pacific or South Asia, nor do they match material in our herbarium (US). I am not a professional cyperologist, but venture to offer this description based on material studied by Dr. RAYNAL, whose botanical career was cut short by an accident in 1979.

***Scleria ovinux* J. Raynal ex Fosberg, sp. nov.**

Planta herbacea crebre caespitosa, rhizomate brevi crasso lignoso horizontali, caulibus valde trigonis carinatis, foliis linearibus 5-nervatis spiraliter dispositis in 2-3 pseudoverticillis ; paniculis ramulis spiciformibus, spicula staminata fusiformis, spicula pistillata late ovoidea hypogynio trilobato, lobis emarginatis, nuce ovoidea, laeve alba rariter ravida.

Plant with thick stems caespitously crowded on a short thick woody horizontal rhizome, stems strongly triangular carinate, glossy brown, lower exposed portions smooth to very slightly roughened, this roughness somewhat more pronounced upward; lower 1-3 sheaths tending to be bladeless, leaves in 2-3 pseudo-whorls, uppermost leaf solitary, contraligule low-triangular, its margins hirsute-ciliate, blades linear, to 1 cm wide, with 5 principal nerves, midnerve strongest, lateral ones rather weaker to prominent, several very minor ones in each interval, margins antrorsely scabridulous, total length of leaves shorter than stems, under surface of blades sparsely appressed hirsute; panicles terminal, fastigate to open with subpatently spreading branches, becoming pyramidal, to 10-12 cm long, 1-several usually somewhat smaller lateral panicles at uppermost nodes; staminate spikelets fusiform, dark chestnut, lateral but tending to be distal on panicle branches, glumes ovate to elliptic, midrib clear but usually not prominent, somewhat excurrent, protruding apiculus somewhat scabrous, stamens somewhat exserted; pistillate spikelets uniflorous, mature pistillate fruiting spikelet broadly ovoid, closely invested by imbricate, broadly ovate glumes with prominent white midrib, this strongly excurrent, sides of these glumes pale with dark brown margins; hypogynium basally broadly and very shortly stipitate, swollen at base, pale, glossy, strongly trilobate, lobes brown, narrow, slightly emarginate; nutlet ovoid, about 2.5×2 mm, apex rounded or obtuse but slightly umbonulate, surface very smooth, white to rarely somewhat gray, upper half exserted from subtending investing glumes.

TYPE : *MacKee* 24376, New Caledonia (holo-, P!; iso-, P!).

ETYMOLOGY : Latin *ovum* (egg) + *nux* (nut), an allusion to the ovoid nutlets.

Closely allied to *Scleria polycarpa* Boeckeler, differing principally in the ovoid and very smooth nutlet, prominent subgibbous hypogynium, scarcely scabridulous leaf-margins. Replacing *S. polycarpa* in New Caledonia, where *S. ovinux* is apparently endemic and widespread on ultrabasic and schistose substrata.

A few specimens from Guam and Palau approach *S. ovinux* in slightly ovoid nutlets. Such are *McGregor* 540, *Fosberg* 99797 and *Anderson s.n.* (all US) from savanna areas on Guam, Marianas, and *Salsedo* 90 (US) from Koror, Palau.

SPECIMENS EXAMINED : NEW CALEDONIA : Basse Tiwaka, 0-2 m, 8.X.1971, *MacKee* 24376 (P, type); Route de Yaté, les Dalmates, 150 m, *MacKee* 32187 (P); Pam, 5 m, *MacKee* 35385 (P); Poum : Nomatch, 20 m, *MacKee* 29352 (P); Poindimié : Povila, 400 m, *MacKee* 28132 (P); 200 m, *MacKee* 32156 (P); Houailou : Nessakouya, 30 m, *MacKee* 31962 (P); Ba, *MacKee* 34321 (P); Haute Diahot : Paala, 500 m, *MacKee* 33076 (P); Haute Tchamba, 550 m, *MacKee* 33027 (P); Balade, *Vieillard* 1460 (P), 1461 (P), 1462 (P), 1464 (P).

A photo (US) of a specimen in Berlin, very probably destroyed, a fragment of a specimen from the "C. Sprengel Herbarium" no collector indicated, from Tanna is very likely a FORSTER collection. It is labeled "*Scleria margaritifera* Willd. non Gaertner" and may be *S. ovinux*, but critical details do not show well in the photo.



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