

DARLINGTONIA VS. CHRYSAMPHORA

by J.A. Mazrimas

Several inquiries have reached our office regarding the usage of the genus name Chrysamphora in a previous CPN article and several notes thereafter. The name was proposed by the University of California botanist, Edward Lee Greene (1845-1915) who was a rather outspoken taxonomist of his time and many of his criticisms were published in his own journal called Pittonia. (1) Among the many articles that Green wrote, one was titled "Against the using of revertible generic names" in which he noted the fact that many taxonomic names slip about from genus to genus in a fashion that is most prejudicial to stability. He continues by saying that action should be taken against insecurity of tenure mostly due to the lack of caution on the part of authors in naming genera. The tenure of Darlingtonia for the California pitcher plant was "rendered too precarious. It may fail us any day" upon the discovery of additional characters. So he subsequently proposed in a brief paragraph the genus name Chrysamphora.

How did this mixup occur? The name Darlingtonia originally proposed by De Candolle in 1824 (2) was applied to a legume but the name was abandoned in 1842 by Bentham after he made it a synonym of Desmanthus. In 1851 (3) John Torrey insisted on honoring his good friend Dr. William Darlington, so he dedicated a new collection of plants discovered by Col. Fremont in California as Darlingtonia rediviva. This was published in an overlooked abstract. In 1853, in a different publication, (4) Torrey adopted the name Darlingtonia as a different genus applied to the California pitcher plant. In his article, he explained that the Californian plant to which he had assigned this name from imperfect specimens proved to be only a species of Styrax which he then named S. californicum. Later, L.C. Wheeler transferred the Torrey name D. rediviva to Styrax rediviva.

Since 1891, when the name Chrysamphora was proposed in an attempt at stabilization, (5) it was used by only a few authors, namely Thomas Howell and earlier E.T. Wherry. Meanwhile, usage of the name Darlingtonia seemed to be universal. The monographs on Sarraceniaceae by Macfarlane (1908), Harper (1918), Uphof (1936), Lloyd (1942) used it not to mention the various indices, flora manuals and textbooks.

## REFERENCES

- 1) Greene, E.L. Pittonia 2:191 (1891).
- 2) De Candolle Ann. Sci. Nat. 4:97 (1824)
- 3) Torrey, J. Amer. Associ. Adv. Sci. Proc. 4:190-193 (1851).
- 4) Torrey, J. Smithsn. Inst. Contrib. Know. 6(4): 1-8, pl. 12 (1853).
- 5) Little, E. Amer. Midland Nat. 33:504-505 (1945).