

# *Chamaecereus luisramirezii* Lodé & Carlier spec. nov.

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*Chamaecereus* is a genus which was created by Britton & Rose in 1922 (Cact. 3: 48, fig.61), whose type was defined by a plant of Spegazzini, *Cereus silvestrii* and named by them as *Chamaecereus silvestrii*.

*Chamaecereus silvestrii* was grouped in the genus *Lobivia* in 1967 by Rowley, within *Echinopsis* in 1983 by Friedrich & Glätzle and the latter were followed by Hunt *et al.* (The New Cactus Lexicon 2006) under the new name of *Echinopsis chamaecereus*, with *Echinopsis silvestrii* being another species.

However, in their molecular study, Schlumpberger & Renner (2012) showed that



*Chamaecereus luisramirezii* in culture.

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*Echinopsis chamaecereus* belongs to another clade, so this genus could logically be reinstated. ***Chamaecereus silvestrii*** could be used again although, according to them, it should contain *Chamaecereus schreiteri* and *C. saltensis* (= *Lobivia schreiteri* and *L. saltensis*). In fact, *Lobivia saltensis* grows in the same area and gene flow may occur. We need more studies to confirm this position, but presently accept the return of ***Chamaecereus***. The many hybrids we find in this genus simply reflect the phenomenon of reticulate evolution, which seems to show how these changes created, through horizontal transfer, new species.

***Chamaecereus luisramirezii*** Lodé & Carlier spec. nov.

**Diagnosis:** differs from ***Chamaecereus silvestrii*** mainly for its long stems (up to 50 cm long), its elongated fruits (spherical in ***C. silvestrii***) and its seeds which are larger and typically curved.

**Type:** Bolivia, S. dept. of Tarija, Argentinian border, between Mecoya-Capilla de Bermejo, 2004, *Luis Ramirez* s.n. (MGC 88524).

**Etymology:** for Luis Alberto Ramirez Pinto (1954-2011), from Ramirez Brothers Cacti, Bolivian cactus grower who discovered the species on both sides of the Bolivian and Argentinian border.

**Shape & habit:** shrubby, hanging or creeping, densely caespitose, forming clumps; stems up to 50 cm long, 10-12 mm  $\varnothing$  at the base, narrowing towards the tips, 5-7 mm  $\varnothing$ , light green to deep green; root easily on the ground.

**Ribs:** slightly ribbed, 9-10, slightly tubercled.

**Areoles:** 4-5 mm apart,  $\pm$  rounded, 0.8-1.0 mm  $\varnothing$ , white, woolly.

**Spines:** 10-12, radiating, adpressed, soft, bristle-like, white.

**Flowers:** diurnal, self-fertile, actinomorphic, funnel-shaped, 5-7 cm long, 6-7.5 cm  $\varnothing$ , orange to brick-red; pericarpel 15 mm long, 4-5 mm  $\varnothing$ , reddish brown, covered with whitish bristles arranged in small tufts.; tube with white, curled hairs. Outer tepals 24, inner tepals 18, 22-24 mm long, 4-5 mm broad, narrowly lanceolate, orange-red, with a slight median nerve; pistil 30-35 mm long, style 25 mm, 1 mm  $\varnothing$ , light green at the base, turning pink and becoming whitish towards the stigma; stigma 7, 5-6 mm long, whitish; stamen >100, filaments 5-8 mm long, red-orange; anthers white yellowish, pollen



whitish to yellowish.

**Fruits:** olive-shaped to elongated, 15-30 mm long,  $\pm$  8 mm  $\emptyset$ , first dark green, dark red purple when ripe, longitudinally dehiscent, perianth remains persistent.

**Seeds:** 1.2-1.5 x 1-1.4 mm, typically curved, black, foveolate.

**Habitat:** said to be found approximately between 800-2300 m alt.

**Distribution:** **Argentina** (Salta), **Bolivia** (Tarija).

**Notes:** especially in Argentina, although also in Europe, this species was widely distributed to collectors as cuttings or artificially produced seeds before its description, so it is very common in culture. Regarding the habit, it was taken as a *Rhipsalis* or *Pfeiffera*, or even an *Aporocactus* until it flowered.

**Threats:** none known.

### **Chamaecereus silvestrii** Britton & Rose

Cact. 3: 48, fig.61. 1922.

**Basionym:** *Cereus silvestrii* Spegazzini, Anal. Mus. Nac. Buenos Aires 111. 4: 483 (1905).

**Type:** Argentina: in mountain thickets, between prov. Tucumán and Salta, Spegazzini s.n. (LPS 23023).

**Synonyms:** *Cereus silvestrii*, *Echinopsis chamaecereus*, *Lobivia silvestrii* (non *Echinopsis silvestrii* Speg 1905).

**Etymology:** for Dr. Filippo Silvestri (1873-1949), Italian entomologist, a friend of Dr. Spegazzini.

**Shape & habit:** small, creeping, densely caespitose, forming clumps to 30 cm or more  $\emptyset$ ; stems slender, soft fleshy, cylindrical, narrowing toward the tip, 4 to 6 cm long or more, light green.

**Ribs:** 6-9, low.

**Areoles:** close-set, with white felt.

**Spines:** 10-15, 1-2 mm long, soft, bristle-like, whitish or brownish.

**Flowers:** diurnal, actinomorphic, funnel-shaped, up to 7 cm long, orange-scarlet, tube slender, with long, brownish or white hair and a few bristles.

**Fruits:** spherical, 7 mm  $\emptyset$ , hairy, dull red, splitting when ripe, perianth remains persistent.

**Seeds:** ca. 1-1.4 x 0.8-1 mm, broadly oval, matt black, minutely pitted.

**Habitat:** said to grow on wooded hills, among mountain thickets between 750-1600 m alt.

**Distribution:** **Argentina** (Catamarca, Salta, Tucumán).

Comparison of flowers, fruits and seeds

*Chamaecereus  
luisramirezii*

*Chamaecereus  
silvestrii*

*Chamaelobivia  
'Alexandrine'*



Sample of a hybrid  
between *Chamaecereus  
silvestrii* and *Lobivia* sp.

Flowers & seeds : © JL  
Fruits : © F. Carrier



*Chamaecereus luisramirezii*

*Chamaecereus silvestrii*

*Chamaelobivia 'Alexandrine'*

**Notes:** Argentinian expert Roberto Kiesling was unsuccessful in finding the species at the supposed location, and only the widespread *Lobivia saltensis* was found. Previously, Harry Blossfeld claimed he may have found it in Salta province, Argentina; a form with thicker stems (BLOSS 1) although I don't know if the plant is still in cultivation.

P. Femenia (pers. comm. 2015) told me that Jacques Lambert found it north west of Tucumán prov. and Catamarca ; J.-F. Richard found it also in Tucumán, while other sources include Salta.

Unfortunately, none of the sources cited included any evidence, e.g. a picture *in situ* of the taxon, thus we cannot give credence to these assertions.

More recently, Eberhard Scholz (ES 73) signalled cultivated plants at Colalao del Valle, at the cemetery, Tucumán, Argentina, at 1700m alt. The Province of Tucumán is located southern Salta, and Colalao del Valle is at only 12 kilometres from Salta prov. limits, it could represent an extension to populations living there and collected by locals; this is obviously pure theory.

In a personal communication (2017), Scholz said: "In 1986, I took two cuttings from a graveyard in the Calchaqui Valley, where I assumed that these plants are not yet as hybridized as they probably are in our collections. However, all attempts to obtain seeds from these two shoots have failed, and I concluded that these are probably shoots of the same clones. I still have the 2 plants from the graveyard in Colalao del Valle and the two plants DH301B/A and DH301B/B from Dietrich Herzog. It is not known, however, whether the latter are the "right" *silvestrii*, since one does not know how the plants described at the time by Spegazzini have looked. *Chamaecereus silvestrii* grows on the Cumbres Calchaquies, but where?"

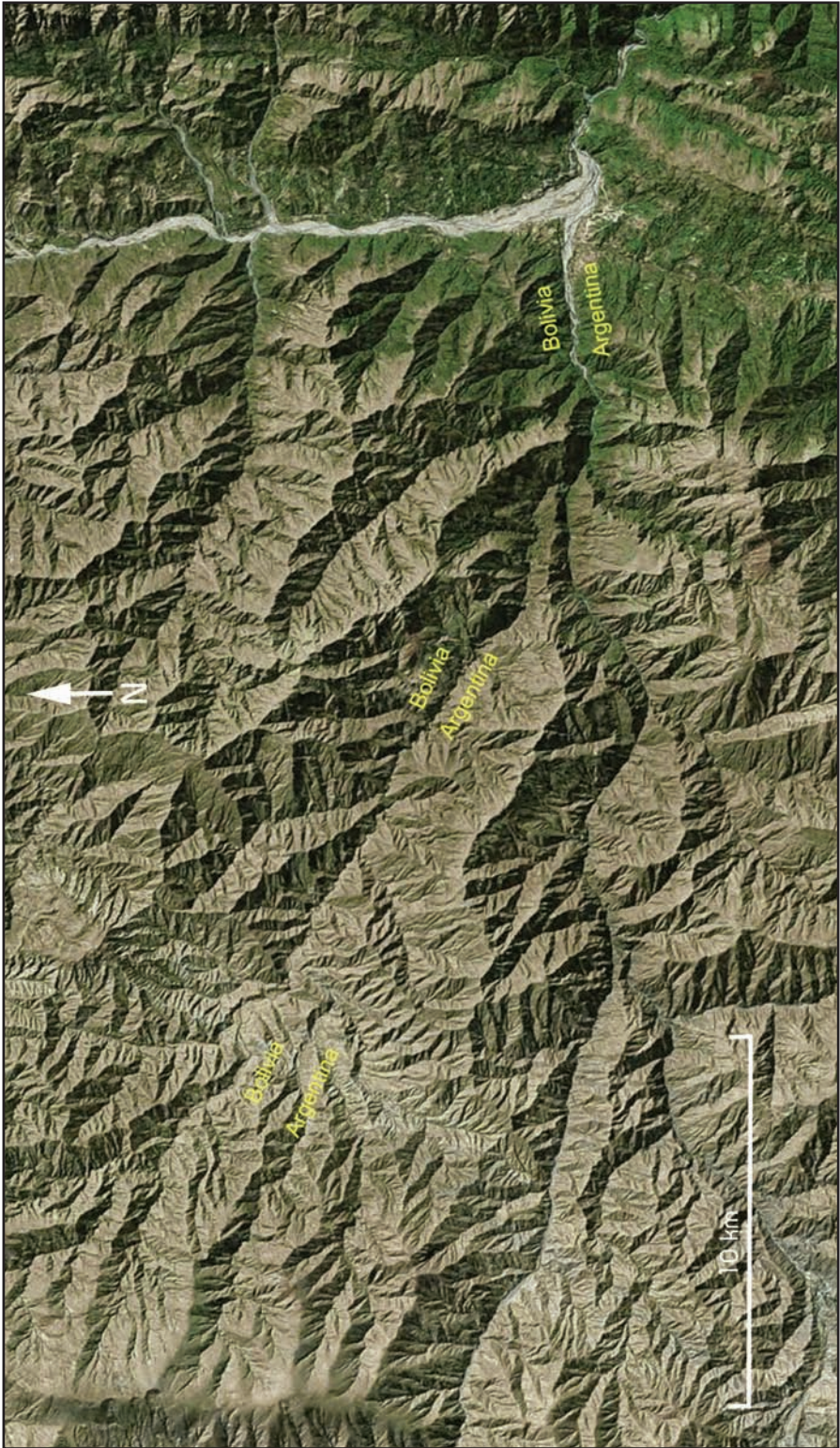
**Threats:** at present, unknown. Widely cultivated worldwide. Extensively used to produce hybrids (Chamaelobivias, etc.).

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Probable extension area of *Chamaecereus luisramirezii*