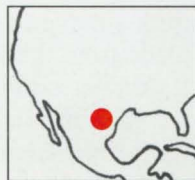


Coryphantha hintoniorum

Dicht & Luethy

= *Coryphantha roederiana* ?

Boedeker



Reto Dicht (Switzerland) & Joël Lodé

Recently described (1999) by Reto Dicht & Andreas Luethy, *Coryphantha hintoniorum* seems to be, according to Joël Lodé, the rediscovery of an old taxon *C. roederiana*, described in 1929 by F. Boedeker. The authors try to disentangle the imbroglio. In absence of the type, the mystery remains...

This species which comes from the Mexican state of Nuevo León was first described by us in 1999. Probably other cactologists have seen it before, without knowing just how to categorize it. The single, hooked central spine reminds one of *Coryphantha palmeri*, but *C. hintoniorum* has less radials and no taproot, becomes much bigger (up to more than 10 cm in diameter and up to 15 cm high) and has mainly much bigger, looser positioned tubercles (22 mm broad at the base and 22 mm long). It is closely related to *Coryphantha sulcata*, but the tubercles of *Coryphantha hintoniorum* are much more rounded at the base, even bulgy on the outside, and they remain round even with age and never cover each other like tiles. The yellowish-white flowers with the bronze tinge and the silvery inner perianth segments are 4 cm in diameter and the centre is never red as in *C. sulcata*.

The range of *C. hintoniorum* is entirely within the Mexican state of Nuevo León from the bottom of the valley along the Carretera Mex 57 from Entronque Roberto to the border to Coahuila, to west of Cerro Potosí in the Sierra las Mazmorras. This species is not frequent at all : on a one-hour march one may find only 5-6 plants which are usually well-hidden in high grass. *C. hintoniorum* is endangered by intensified farming.

We named the plant *C. hintoniorum* in honour of the Hinton family whose members do a unique job as botanists now in their 4th generation and on whose farmland this species also grows.

What Joël Lodé wrote about *C. hintoniorum* and *C. roederiana* is indeed a possibility which we long discussed before publishing *C. hintoniorum*. Our 1997 expedition, on which we discovered *C. hintoniorum*, had as major target the possible redetection of *C. speciosa*, *obscura* and *roederiana*.

When we saw *C. hintoniorum* for the first time, our very first thought was : *C. roederiana* and we had its original description with us. Two facts however made us



Coryphantha hintoniorum in habitat. (Photo : Reto Dicht).



Coryphantha roederiana JL217 in collection (Photo : J. L.).



Coryphantha hintoniorum in habitat.
(Photo : George Hinton).

describe *C. hintoniorum* as a new species: first the discrepancies to the original description of *C. roederiana* and second the fact that after our rediscovery of *C. speciosa* near Monclova, (see our article in *Kakt.and.Sukk.* 49(9):196, 1998) we also found plants which obviously were *C. sulcata*, but which completely fitted the original description of *C. roederiana*. and were from Coahuila, too, and differing from *C. hintoniorum* mainly in tubercle-shape.

The main discrepancies between *C. hintoniorum* and *C. roederiana* are : tubercle-series of 13:21 (*roederiana* 8:13), centrals always hooked (*roederiana* : "tip more or less curved, but more or less never hooked") and mainly the tubercle-size and form. *C. hintoniorum* has very large tubercles which are 22 mm broad and 22 mm long (*roederiana* : 8-12 mm broad, 16 mm long. Another difference concerns the origin (up to now we know of about 20 locations for *C. hintoniorum*, all of them in

N.L. and none in Coahuila, although George Hinton has studied the whole region carefully).

In fact most other features, mainly growth-form, radial spines and flowers are very similar but since no type of *C. roederiana* exists it is impossible to clearly reidentify it nowadays and because of the discrepancy of tubercle-size and form (which are two of the most important distinguishing features among *Coryphantha* species) and the constant hooks we concluded that *C. roederiana*. and *C. hintoniorum* are not the same, although very close to each other.

I also believe that the Joel Lodé's plant may be identical to HK 1491 which is sold under the false name of *C. vogtherriana*. Lastly, the seeds sold by Mesa Garden under the name of *C. roederiana* SB1143, and coming from Ojo Caliente, Coahuila, Mexico, have flowers with a red throat, which does not fit with the original description. Otherwise, Joel Lodé's plant is really very similar to the plants which we found in the North of the Hinton's farm, in the mountains, and which we called "dwarf form" or "mountain form" of *C. hintoniorum*.

Text : Reto Dicht & J.L., Photos : Reto Dicht, George Hinton & J.L.

(Reto Dicht and George Hinton are preparing, in the course of this year, a monograph of the genus *Coryphantha*).

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