



An update to *Ptisana* (Marattiaceae) in New Caledonia, with a new combination *P. acuminata*

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In a 2023 revision of the fern genus *Ptisana* in New Caledonia, it was discovered that the name *Marattia acuminata* has priority by a matter of months over the long-used name *Marattia attenuata*. A proposal to conserve the name *M. attenuata* against *M. acuminata* was not approved by the Nomenclature Committee for Vascular Plants, necessitating a new combination in *Ptisana*.

In 1793, Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière, the naturalist on the expedition in search of the missing Jean-François de La Pérouse and his crew, collected a large fern in the family Marattiaceae while in New Caledonia. Labillardière identified it as a *Myriotheca* Commerson ex Jussieu (1789: 15, 447) in his voyage journal (Labillardière 1800), a *Marattia* Swartz (1788: 8, 128) in a later publication (Labillardière 1824), and today it is treated in the genus *Ptisana* Murdock (2008: 744).

In a monograph of Marattiaceae (de Vriese & Harting 1853), de Vriese noted that *Marattia acuminata* Willdenow ex Kaulfuss (1824: 33, t. 1, f. 2) was likely published earlier than *Marattia attenuata* Labillardière (1824: 9, t. 13, 14), and both names were based on duplicate specimens from Labillardière's gathering, but de Vriese opted to use *M. attenuata* because the name came from the collector himself and it was published in the same year. All subsequent authors followed suit (see Murdock & Perrie 2023 for a review). The current Code is not so flexible when it comes to the priority of names, and the priority here is clear. Kaulfuss's publication of *M. acuminata* in *Enumeratio Filicum* first appeared between 8 April and 28 May 1824, while the initial part of Labillardière's *Sertum Austro-Caledonicum*, which included *M. attenuata*, was published later that same year, between 4–9 October 1824 (Staffleu & Cowan 1979). Under ICN Art. 11, the earlier name *M. acuminata* has priority, and under ICN Art. 52, *M. attenuata* is illegitimate by including the type of *M. acuminata* (Turland *et al.* 2025).

This issue was uncovered during the preparation of a revision of the *Ptisana* of New Caledonia (Shepherd *et al.* 2023), and the present authors submitted a proposal (2958) to conserve the long-used *M. attenuata* Labill. against *M. acuminata* Willd. ex Kaulf. (Murdock & Perrie 2023) to preserve its long history of use under ICN Art. 14 (Turland *et al.* 2025). This proposal was not approved by the Nomenclature Committee for Vascular Plants, with some members determining it to be a name 'with modest use whose replacement by an older synonym would cause little disruption' (Applequist 2026).

Taxonomy

Following Shepherd *et al.* (2023), there are currently three species of *Ptisana* recognized in New Caledonia, all endemic to Grand Terre, with one purely nomenclatural change made here. The currently recognized species include the critically endangered *P. rolandi-principis* (Rosenstock 1911: 162) Christenhusz (2011: 22), the recently reinstated vulnerable species *P. soluta* (Compton 1922: 456) Murdock & Perrie (Shepherd *et al.* 2023: 53), and the most widespread species, until now known as *P. attenuata* (Labillardière 1824: 9, t. 13, 14) Murdock (2008: 746), which requires a new combination. Additional isolectotypes at BR and PRC were located after the publication of Shepherd *et al.* (2023) and are included below.

- Ptisana acuminata* (Willd. ex Kaulf.) Murdock & Perrie, **comb. nov.** Basionym: *Marattia acuminata* Willdenow ex Kaulfuss (1824 [8 April–28 May]: 33, t. 1, f. 2).
- Type:**—NEW CALEDONIA. s.l., s.d., *Labillardière s.n.* (lectotype: B [B-W 19456!], designated by Shepherd *et al.* (2023: 4); isolectotypes: BM [BM000787118!], BR [BR0000006976705!, BR0000006976767!], FI [FI004197!], P [P00518392!, P00518393!, P00518394!, P00518395!, P00518396!, P00518397!, P00518398!, P01646579!], PRC [PRC455618!]).
- = *Marattia attenuata* Labillardière (1824 [4–9 October]: 9, t. 13, 14), *nom. illeg.* (superfluous upon publication by including the type of *M. acuminata* Willd. ex Kaulf.). **Type:**—NEW CALEDONIA. s.l., s.d., *Labillardière s.n.* (lectotype: P [P00518397!], designated by Shepherd *et al.* (2023: 4); isolectotypes: B [B-W 19456!], BM [BM000787118!], BR [BR0000006976705!, BR0000006976767!], FI [FI004197!], P [P00518392!, P00518393!, P00518394!, P00518395!, P00518396!, P00518398!, P01646579!], PRC [PRC455618!]).
- = *Marattia cooperi* T. Moore (1863: 149). **Type:**—NEW CALEDONIA. s.l., s.d., *in cult.* Hort. Veitch (lectotype: K [K001057733!], designated by Shepherd *et al.* (2023: 4)).

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