

# *Rhododendron subulatum*, comb. nova (Ericaceae)

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Following the commonly accepted generic concept, the East Asian species *Ledum subulatum* (Nakai) A.P.Khokhr. & Mazurenko (Ericaceae) is transferred to the genus *Rhododendron* L. as *Rhododendron subulatum* (Nakai) Harmaja. A list of all species of *Rhododendron* subsect. *Ledum* (genus *Ledum* L.), according to current knowledge, is provided.

Key words: Ericaceae, *Ledum*, nomenclature, *Rhododendron*, taxonomy

Kron and Judd (1990), on morphological grounds, united the genus *Ledum* (Ericaceae) with *Rhododendron*. Within the latter, the first-named taxon constitutes the subsection *Ledum*. This merger has gained support increasingly, not least through molecular studies (e.g., Kron 1997, Kurashige *et al.* 1998, 2001). I myself have approved this treatment and have published a few studies on subsect. *Ledum* (e.g., Harmaja 1991, 1999).

According to the local knowledge (Khokhryakov & Mazurenko 1991), *Ledum subulatum* (Nakai) A.P.Khokhr. & Mazurenko is a fairly well-defined East Asian species which occurs sympatrically with some related species. I have seen a few specimens referable to it in our herbarium (H). Following the generic philosophy mentioned above, the following new combination is necessary:

## ***Rhododendron subulatum* (Nakai) Harmaja, comb. nova**

Basionym: *Ledum palustre* L. var. *subulatum* Nakai, Bot. Mag. (Tokyo) 31: 103. 1917. — *Ledum subulatum* (Nakai) A.P.Khokhr. & Mazurenko in Kharkevich, Sosud. rast. Sovetskogo Daln. Vost. 5: 125. 1991. — Holotype: *T. Nakai* 2168 from (North) Korea (TI).

*Ledum palustre* L. ssp. *angustissimum* Vorosch., Byull. Moskovskogo Obshch. Ispyt. Prir., otd. biol., 83: 1187. 1978 (*vide* Khokhryakov & Mazurenko 1991).

*Rhododendron subulatum* differs from all the other species of *Rhododendron* subsect. *Ledum* (genus *Ledum*) through its almost acicular leaves. The leaves are (10–)20–35(–50) mm long and 1–2(–3) mm broad; brown hairs are present on the underside of the leaves like in most species of the subsection. The flowers have mostly a faint rosy tinge. The species pos-

sesses a fairly wide distribution in eastern Asia (except in the north), mainly in Russia but also extending to NE China, North Korea, and Japan. *Rhododendron subulatum* is treated (in Russian, under *Ledum*) by Khokhryakov and Mazurenko (1991). They also give a map of its distribution in Russian Far East.

*Rhododendron* subsect. *Ledum* comprises eight species and one nothospecies according to the present knowledge (Harmaja 1991, 1998, and the present paper): *R. × columbianum* (Piper) Harmaja, *R. diversipilosum* (Nakai) Harmaja, *R. groenlandicum* (Oeder) Kron & Judd, *R. hypoleucum* (Kom.) Harmaja, *R. neoglandulosum* Harmaja, *R. subarcticum* Harmaja, *R. subulatum* (Nakai) Harmaja, *R. tolmachevii* Harmaja, and *R. tomentosum* Harmaja. '*Ledum columbianum* Piper' is commonly regarded as the hybrid between *R. groenlandicum* and *R. neoglandulosum* (see e.g. Savile 1969, Small & Catling 2000). This hybrid may have a binomial of its own as it appears to possess a partly independent distribution.

Easternmost Asia is the centre of diversity of *Ledum*. This area, in particular, still provides taxonomic work to do.

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