

# ***Chrysalidocarpus burtscherorum* (Arecaceae)**

## **A New Combination for a Previous Name**

DONALD R. HODEL

In a just published paper (24 August 2022) based on a monumental molecular analysis of the subtribe Dypsidinae (including until recently the genera *Dypsis*, *Lemurophoenix*, *Marojejya*, and *Masoala*), which mostly occurs in Madagascar but with a few species in adjacent islands, Eiserhardt et al. (2022) found that the genus *Dypsis*, comprising 173 species, was untenable as previously understood. Thus, they justifiably divided *Dypsis* into three genera, in the process resurrecting two of them from synonymy, *Chrysalidocarpus* and *Vonitra*, into which they moved many of the former *Dypsis* species, necessitating numerous name changes sure to raise the ire and hackles of palm collectors, hobbyists, and growers everywhere. Now new names have to be learned and labels, lists, and databases corrected and updated; indeed, in some cases, even the suffix of the species epithets will change (for example *Dypsis basilonga* to *Chrysalidocarpus basilongus*).

For an old-timer like me, *Chrysalidocarpus* and *Vonitra* bring back memories of my first introduction to palms 50 years ago as a student at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona. Then, during a subtropical plant materials class that my late professor and soon-to-be avid palm friend James L. Degen was conducting, I learned about *Chrysalidocarpus lutescens*, with which I was immediately smitten because of its numerous attributes, including clustered habit with neat, green, ringed stems, arching, bright green, pinnate leaves with attractive golden yellow petioles and rachises, waxy white crownshaft, and golden fruits. Palm collectors often overlook these features and scoff at this species now, perhaps because it is so common. Later, when the name was changed to *Dypsis lutescens*, some raised their eyebrows and protested but generally shrugged it off and accepted the name; it was certainly easier to say and spell.

So now, Eiserhardt et al. (2022) have moved many species out of *Dypsis* to the resurrected *Chrysalidocarpus* (54 species) and some to *Vonitra* (10 species). While noting that morphology alone is inadequate to understand and delineate genera in the Dypsidinae, they relied on morphological characters in their key to distinguish these three genera, many of which overlap or intergrade, pointing out the value of supporting molecular data. The fibrous and hairy leaf bases fairly easily distinguish *Vonitra*; however, distinguishing between *Chrysalidocarpus* and *Dypsis* is trickier. Generally, *Chrysalidocarpus* tends to comprise larger palms with larger stems and leaves and thicker rachillae while *Dypsis* includes smaller, understory palms with slender stems and smaller leaves and slender rachillae although outliers exist that defy easy classification.



1. *Chrysalidocarpus burtscherorum*, type plant, Hodel 3999, Fullerton, California.

The resurrection of *Chrysalidocarpus* out of *Dypsis* directly affects the name *Dypsis burtscherorum* (**Fig. 1**) which I named for Judy and Bob Burtscher of Fullerton, California (Hodel 2020). Because it has larger stems and leaves and thicker rachillae, and because I pointed out it is related to *D. madagascariensis*, which Eiserhardt et al. (2022) returned to *Chrysalidocarpus*, it is obvious that *D. burtscherorum*, too, should be moved to *Chrysalidocarpus*. Here I provide a new combination that reflects its new placement in *Chrysalidocarpus*.

***Chrysalidocarpus burtscherorum* (Hodel) Hodel, comb. nov.**

≡ *Dypsis burtscherorum* Hodel, PalmArbor 2020-10: 1. 2020.

### Literature Cited

- Eiserhardt, Wolf L., S. Bellot, R. S. Cowan, J. Dransfield, L. E. S. F. Hansen, K. Heyduk, R. N. Rabarijaona, M. Rakotoarinivo, and W. J. Baker. 2022. Phylogenomics and generic limits in the Dypsidinae (Arecaceae), the largest palm radiation in Madagascar. *Taxon* 00 (00): 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tax.12797>
- Hodel, D. R. 2020. *Dypsis burtscherorum*, a new species from cultivation. PalmArbor 2020-06: 1-16. <https://ucanr.edu/sites/HodelPalmsTrees/files/334511.pdf>

---

**Donald R. Hodel** is the emeritus landscape horticulture advisor for the University of California Cooperative Extension in Los Angeles and specializes in the selection and management of palms and trees. [drhodel@ucanr.edu](mailto:drhodel@ucanr.edu)

Text and photographs © 2022 by D. R. Hodel.

Publication date: 26 August 2022.

PalmArbor: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/HodelPalmsTrees/PalmArbor/>

**ISSN 2690-3245**

Editor-In-Chief: Donald R. Hodel

Hodel Palms and Trees: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/HodelPalmsTrees/>