

Hoya spp. from Tanjung Paparu, Pulau Saparua, Moluku Province, Indonesia

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Habitat and Climate



The cape is very rugged and dissected karst limestone with deep narrow crevices. The surface is highly eroded and brittle. The vegetation is largely intact but over the centuries has undoubtedly been modified by man. *Pandanus* sp. dominate the understory, and a mixture of hardwoods form a broken canopy. *Hoya* cf. *coronaria* is a predominant climber on the cliff edges. Sparse leaf litter was scattered across the surface forming pockets soil.

Pulau Saparua is the driest of the islands to the east of Ambon and south of Ceram. The monsoon reaches the island normally from July to September, bringing heavy rainfall and winds, particularly in August. During this period, high waves drench everything from the cliff edges to many meters inland. The heavy rains eventually wash the salt out of the rocks and leaf litter,

An El Nino event in 2016 caused a 15 month drought on the island, killing a number of large hardwoods. In September 2017 it rained non-stop for over 30 days.

The vegetation at this location, with exceptions, seems very resilient to the conditions described above.

Hoya cf. coronaria

This Hoya (actually belonging to the Hoya section of Eriostemma) was a vigorous climber ranking over the highest branches of the trees within 10m of the cliff edges. The leading stems hung down 10-15m from the branches, and on the seaward side the stems were immersed in sea water at high tide. These stems and those lying horizontally on the karst were producing roots from along the stem between the leaf nodes. Leaves ovate, c. 9cm long by 5cm wide, completely glabrous, in contrast to the description of typical *H. coronaria*. Inflorescences were borne on new hanging stems within 1-2m of the tips. Most inflorescences were in full sun or half-shadow. Some inflorescences and the one seed-pod found were in full shadow and within reach of high tides. Two main colour forms were found, yellow and burgundy red. The red flowers were mostly a pale burgundy, but one very deep red clone was seen. Flower size: c. 25 mm. The flowers and their petioles were lightly pubescent.







Hoya inconspicua

This small leaved (c. 2.5 wide by 5.0 cm long) species grew in loose colonies on tree branches in full or half shade. Inflorescences were only seen on plants in full shade. Flower size c. 4mm. During storms, the plants would be heavily sprayed with sea water.



Hoya globulifera

The only specimen found of this species consisted of a few very dehydrated stems hanging from a tree in half shade. Leaves obovate c. 7cm long by 5cm at the widest. Flowers c. 6mm in diameter.



Dischidia imbricata

This *Dischidia* grew mostly high up in trees rooted directly on the cliff edge. Where plants were exposed to full sun, the leaves look on a deep purple tone. Flowers were borne underneath the cusped leaves. Copious roots developed from the nodes underneath the leaves, and nutrients were brought in by large colonies of ants.



Notes

Another *Hoya* sp. was seen that was morphologically similar to *H. inconspicua*, but the leaves were more elongated. No floral material was found.

Several other species of *Dischidia* were also observed growing epiphytically.

These identifications have been either confirmed or made by Dr. Michele Rodda of the Singapore National Herbarium.