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East African bryophytes, XXVI. New records from Mayotte (Maore) Island (French Comoro)

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Nine species of liverworts, *Cololejeunea obtusifolia* (E. W. Jones) Tixier, *C. zenkeri* (Steph.) E. W. Jones, *Colura heimii* Ast, *Cyathodium cavernarum* Kunze, *Diplasiolejeunea cobrensis* Gottsche ex Steph., *Frullania variegata* Steph., *Notoscyphus lutescens* (Lehm. & Lindenb.) Mitt., *Plagiochila repanda* (Schwägr.) Lindenb. and *Solenostoma borgeii* (Gottsche ex Pearson) Steph., and two species of mosses, *Archidium ohioense* Schimp. ex Müll. Hal. and *Splachnobryum obtusum* (Brid.) Müll. Hal., are newly reported to the flora of Mayotte Island, and five species of hepatics, *Cheilolejeunea trapezia* (Nees) Kachroo & R. M. Schust., *Cololejeunea furcilibulata* (Berrie & E. W. Jones) R. M. Schust., *Diplasiolejeunea rudolphiana* Steph., *Lepidozia succida* Mitt. and *Tylimanthus laxus* (Lehm. & Lindenb.) Spruce, are recorded for the first time from the Comoro Archipelago, *Diplasiolejeunea* also from Madagascar. *Lejeunea pililoba* Spruce and *Leptolejeunea subdentata* Schiffn. ex Herzog are new records of hepatics for the whole of Africa. Individuality of ocean island floras is emphasized.

Key words: Bryophyta, Comoro Islands, Maore Island, Marchantiophyta, Mayotte Island, island biogeography

Introduction

The Comoro Islands (Shikomori Komori, French: Les Comores, Arabic: Juzur al-Qamar) form an archipelago of four larger and several smaller islands of volcanic origin developed above a “hot spot” of the Indian Ocean floor since the Miocene until recent times. They are situated in the Mozambique Channel, halfway between the northern tip of Mozambique and of Madagascar. The three western islands, Grand

Comoro, Moheli and Anjouan, form the independent Union of the Comoros, while the eastern Mayotte island belongs to the French Union, as an overseas “Departmental Collectivity”. Apart from the classic French works in the XIX century, which dealt mostly with mosses (see O’Shea 2006), very little attention was paid to the bryoflora of the Comoro Islands, especially of Mayotte (Maore) Island. The first short account on the liverworts of Anjuan (Ndzouani or Johanna Island) in the Comoro Archipelago was published by Herzog (1947). Crosby *et al.*

(1983) published a catalogue of mosses from the Indian Ocean islands, while the first modern checklist of liverworts from the same area was done by Grolle (1995). Since then checklists are regularly published both for mosses and liverworts (O’Shea 2006, Wigginton 2009).

I visited the Comoro Islands first in 1991 accompanied by a phanerogam botanist, Stephen Mantkelow (UPS), then in 1992, together with Robert E. Magill (MO), sponsored by the National Geographic Society (USA). The second time we visited all Comoro Islands, including also Mayotte, this time an “overseas department” of France. The first results of this collecting expedition on Mayotte Island were already published (Pócs 1993, 1995, 1997, Enroth & Magill 1994, Reese *et al.* 1994).

We were invited together with my wife, Sarolta Pócs, in 2005 by the local authorities to carry out a biodiversity survey on the bryophytes of Mayotte (Maore or Mawuti) Island, the easternmost member of the Comoro Archipelago. This oceanic island lies 330 km NW from Madagascar. It is roughly 40 km long and 20 km wide, very dissected, being the remnant of several volcanic calderas and partly inundated by the rising sea level after the Pleistocene. The highest point of the island is Mt. Bénara (660 m), but

several ridges and peaks exceed an altitude of 500 m. The climate is seasonal wet tropical except the southernmost part with seasonal semi-arid climate. Accordingly, the greatest part of the island before human activities was covered by tropical lowland and submontane rainforests (see Fig. 3), the highest summits with mossy cloud forests and elfin woodlands (see Fig. 4). The southernmost sector and two small eastern islets (Petite-Terre or Pamanzi and M'Bouzi <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pamanzi>) were dominated by dry semideciduous forests. Greater part of these forests are already replaced by agriculture, or in many cases are intercropped. But luckily, there are several protected forest reserves and many smaller remnants in areas of difficult access.

The island is notorious for its high proportion of endemics, although the flora is associated to that of Madagascar and to other islands of the Comoro Archipelago. It proved to be an excellent experimental area of island biogeography. Its bryofloristic composition is quite different from the neighbouring islands. I supposed (Pócs 2006a) that the sequence of colonization is the main factor which causes this differences and underlined the importance of steep, partly open summits in capturing airborne propagules ("an-

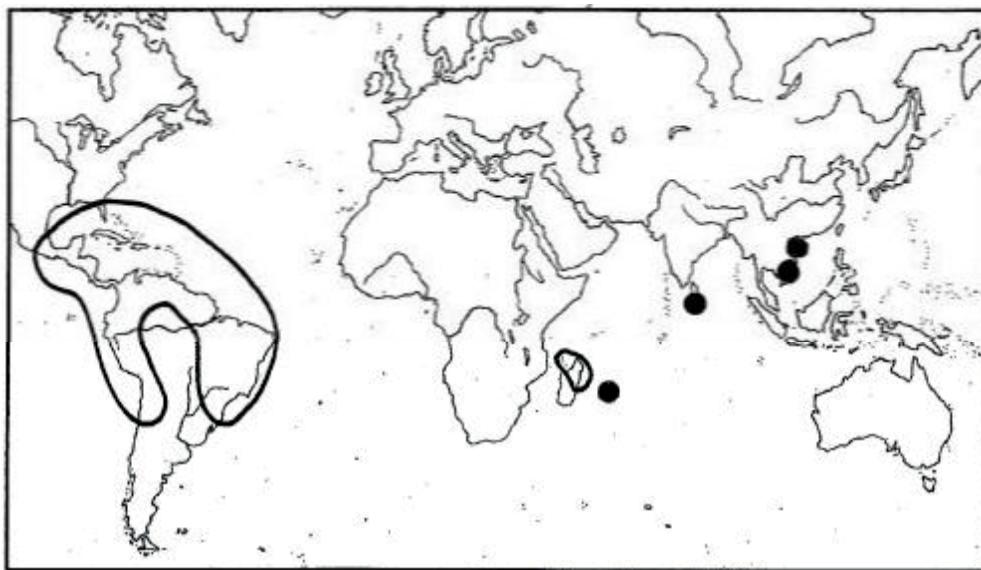


Fig. 1: Distribution of *Diplasiolejeunea rudolphiana* Steph.

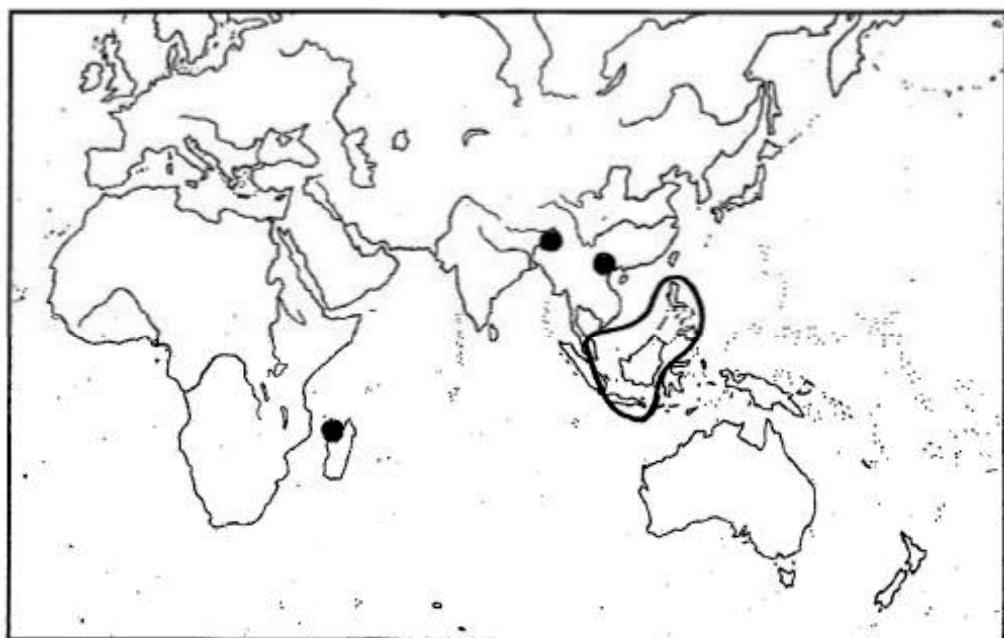


Fig. 2: Distribution of *Leptolejeunea subdentata* Schiffn. ex Herzog

tenna phenomenon”).

During our two week field work in May 2005 we visited with the help of the staff of Forest Station most of the forest areas and tried to collect as many specimens as we could, including common species. The aim of the survey was to prepare an inventory of the bryophytes within the French natural heritage programme: ZNIEFF (Zones Naturelles d’Intérêt Ecologique Faunistique et Floristique = Natural Zones of Animal and Plant Ecological Interest, INPN), revealing the biodiversity of the island. All specimens were divided and one part was deposited in the local forestry herbarium, another set sent to Paris Natural History Museum (PC), while one full set was brought home and deposited in the herbarium of Eger College (EGR). A great part of the specimens are already identified and one publication on the new, endemic *Telaranea mao-rensis* Pócs was published (Pócs 2006b).

In the present paper I would like to enumerate from the already identified material those records, which are new to the island or to the whole Comoro Archipelago, according to the checklists of Wigginton (2009) or in case of the

two mosses of O’Shea (2006). Already published or locally interesting records will be summarized later, in the final inventory. An other part of the collection is still unidentified, mostly belonging to genera which are not yet revised for the Indian Ocean islands (like ptychanthroid Lejeuneaceae, many species of *Frullania*, *Cheilolejeunea*, *Lejeunea*, *Microlejeunea*, and most of the mosses).

List of new records

After the species name stands the description of locality followed by our collecting number, which consist of a five digits locality number and a letter. After the substrate, habitat and the geographic distribution are given.

Liverworts

Cheilolejeunea trapezia (Nees) Kachroo & R. M. Schust. (Fig. 5)

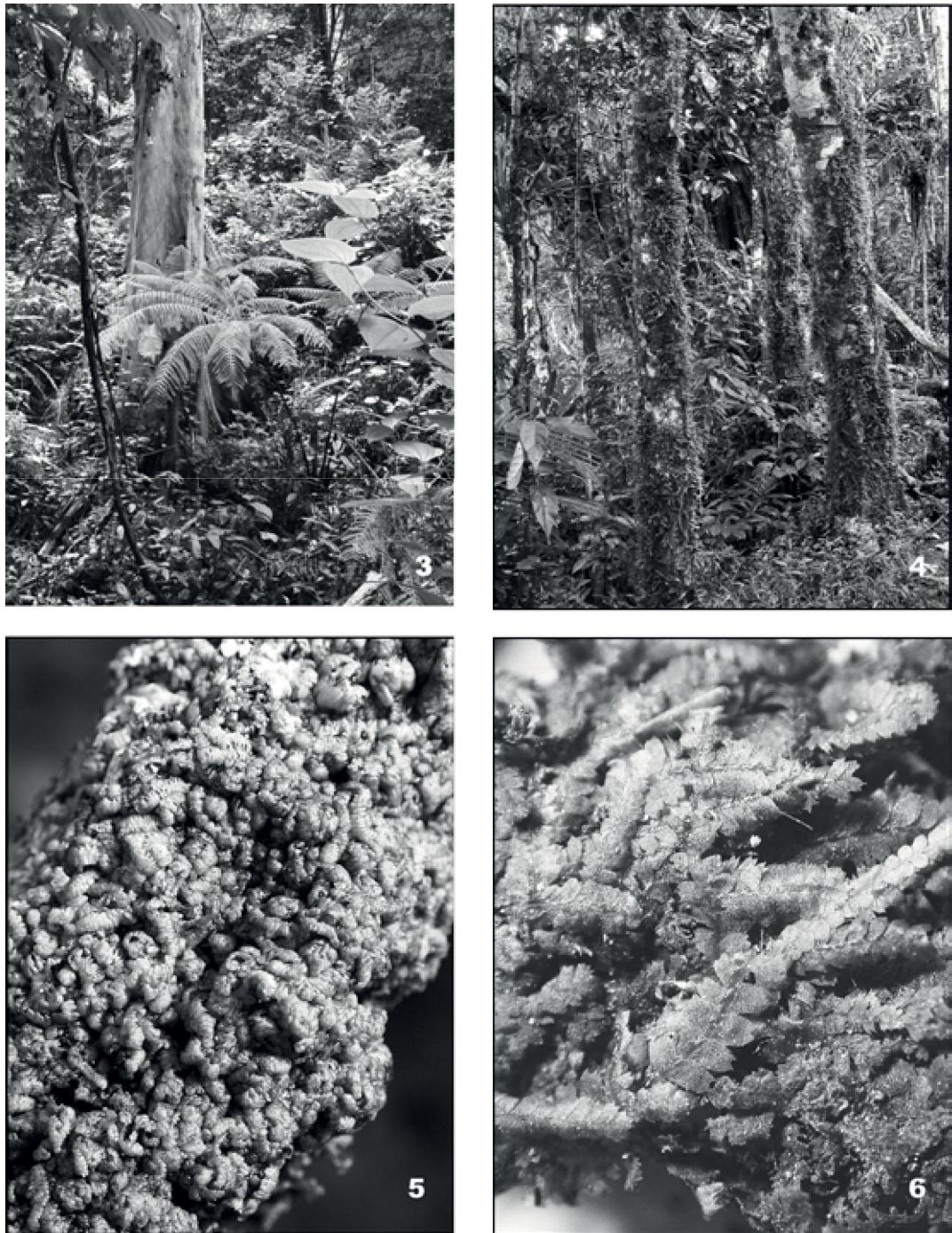


Fig. 3: Submontane rainforest on the NW ridge of Mt. Bénara at 450 m. – Fig. 4: Mossy cloud forest on the main ridge of Mt. Bénara at 600 m. – Fig. 5: *Cheilolejeunea trapezia* (Nees) Kachroo & R. M. Schust., covering the stilt roots of *Avicennia marina* in the mangrove of Baie de Longoni at the north coast. – Fig. 6: *Lepidozia succida* Mitt. on the floor of a submontane rainforest on the S ridge of Mt. M'Tsapéré, at 400 m.

Baie de Longoni at the north coast, 2 km ESE from Dzoumonyé, alt. 0–2 m, 12°43.56–70'S, 45°07.68–90'E, no. 05096/A, fully covering the bark of mangrove trees down to the tide line (det. I. Malombe).

New to the Comoro Islands. A palaeotropic species.

Cololejeunea furcilibulata (Berrie & E. W. Jones) R. M. Schust.

Rés. For. des Crêtes du Sud, 0.5–1 km W from Dapani village, lowland rainforest at alt. 110–120 m, 12°58.12'S, 45°08.73–09.22'E, no. 05080/K, on decaying trunk.

New to the Comoro Islands. Tropical African species.

C. obtusifolia (E. W. Jones) Tixier

South ridge of Mt. M'tsapéré, 1.7 km NNW from Vahibé village, 5 km W from Mamoudzou, along path 'GR MT 1', alt. 400 m, 12°46.34–46.39'S, 45°10.41–10.46'E, no. 05100/AG, epiphyllous in primary rainforest.

New to Mayotte. Widespread tropical African species.

C. zenkeri (Steph.) E. W. Jones

Crête NW du Mt. Bénara, alt. 400–500 m, 12°52.28–52.53'S, 45°09.24–09.41'E, no. 05105/G, epiphyllous in mesic rainforest.

New to Mayotte. Tropical African species.

Colura heimii Ast (Fig. 7)

Main ridge of Mt. Bénara, alt. 600–650 m, 12°52.6'S, 45°09.6'E, no. 05106/BS, on twigs in mossy elfin forest at 660 m alt.

New to Mayotte. Endemic of the East African Indian Ocean islands.

Cyathodium cavernarum Kunze (Fig. 9)

Rés. For. Majimbini, E slope of Mt. Tsapéré, 5 km WNW de Mamoudzou, above Maison de Convalescence, at 350–400 m, 12°46.'S, 45°11.5'E, no. 05075/B, on shady roadcut in secondary rainforest with plantations; Rés. For. e Songoro Mbili, NE slope of Mt. Combani 2.5 km SE from Combani village, alt. 360–480 m, 12°48.2–3'S, 45°09.2–3'E, no. 05071/A, in rock cavities of *Pandanus mayottensis* forest; Petite Terre islet, Plages de Moya, alt. 2–4 m, 12°46.87'S, 45° 17.61'E, no. 05108/H, shady gullies in volcanic ash.

New to Mayotte. Pantropical. Known under the name of *Cyathodium africanum* Mitt., which was synonymised with *C. cavernarum* by Srivastava & Dixit (1996).

Diplasiolejeunea cobrensis Gottsche ex Steph.

Rés. For. de Bénara, main ridge towards the summit of Mt. Tchaourembo, 2.5 km N de Poroani, alt. 500 m, 12°52.16'S, 45°08.75'E, no. 05092/R, epiphyllous in rocky submontane rainforest.

New to Mayotte. A rare pantropical species, known only from Ghana, Sierra Leone and Madagascar in Africa.

D. rudolphiana Steph. (Figs. 1, 8 and 10)

Rés. For. des Crêtes du Sud, west ridge of Mt. Choungui, NE from Choungui village, alt. 450–540 m, 12°57.36–57.41'S, 45°07.97–08.00'E, no. 05102/B, on twigs in elfin forest dominated by *Syzygium cordatum*, with many epiphytes.

New to the Comoro Archipelago. A pantropical species, mainly distributed in the Neotropics

(Reyes 1982) with disjunct occurrences in Asia (Zhu & So 2001). It was first recorded from Africa in Mauritius by Tixier & Gueho (1997), in their quite unknown book. We collected it also in:

Madagascar. N of lake Mantasoa (E of Antananarivo), on ericaceous twigs at 1500 m, no. 9851/Z; Mananara North Biosphere Reserve, coastal dune forest, no. 9875/AS, 5 km SSW of Ambila-Lemaitso, on twigs in coastal dune forests and heaths, no. 9881/AH and no. 9882/AE.

Frullania variegata Steph.

Rés. For. des Crêtes du Sud, crête Ouest du Mt. Choungui NE from Choungui village, alt. 450–540 m, 12°57.36–57.41'S, 45°07.97–08.00'E, no. 05102/AE, on open rocks.

New to Mayotte. A tropical African species.

Lejeunea pililoba Spruce (Fig. 11)

Bouéni Bay, coastal swamp forest dominated by *Heritiera littoralis* in the uppermost tidal zone, N of Mramadoudou village, alt. 1 m, 12°55.34'S, 45°09.10'E, no. 05074/B, on buttress; Crêtes de Sud Forest Res., lowland rainforest 1 km W of Dapani village, alt. 110–210 m, 12°58.20'S, 45°08.80'E, no. 05080/L, on bark and on shady rocks; on the ESE slope of Mt. Vatounkaridi, rocky rainforest 1.8 km WNW of Dapani village, alt. 200 m, 12°58.30'S, 45°08.70'E, no. 05081/D; W ridge of Mt. Choungui, 0.5 km NE of Choungui village, mesic evergreen forest and degraded rainforest, alt. 280–400 m, 12°57.38–54'S, 45°07.74–94'E, no. 05082/AF, 05083/E; NE-SW ridge of Mt. Hatchiroungou, mesic evergreen forest, alt. 400 m, 12°42.75'S, 45°03.80–04.30'E, no. 05087/M; Mt.Tchaourembo 2.5 km N of Poroani, mesic evergreen forest dominated by *Calophyllum* sp. and by *Pandanus mayottenensis*, alt. 300–500 m, 12°52.16–30'S, 45°08.75–09.28'E, no. 05091/B; Coconi, lowland rainforest remnants in the garden of “Lycée d’Agricole

d’Experimentation”, alt. 68 m, 12°49.84'S, 45°08.09'E, no. 05095/A; Longoni Bay, SE from Dzoumonyé, coastal swamp forest dominated by *Erythrina fusca* with dense *Acrostichum aureum* undergrowth, alt. 1–3 m, 12°43.6'S, 45°07.52'E, no. 05097/C, on bark.

New to the whole of tropical Africa. A lowland forest species widespread in the Neotropis, which was not known from Africa, until I published it from Mayotte Island, where it seems to be widespread (both local and world maps in Pócs 2006a), but lacking in Wigginton’s (2009) checklist.

Lepidozia succida Mitt. (Fig. 6)

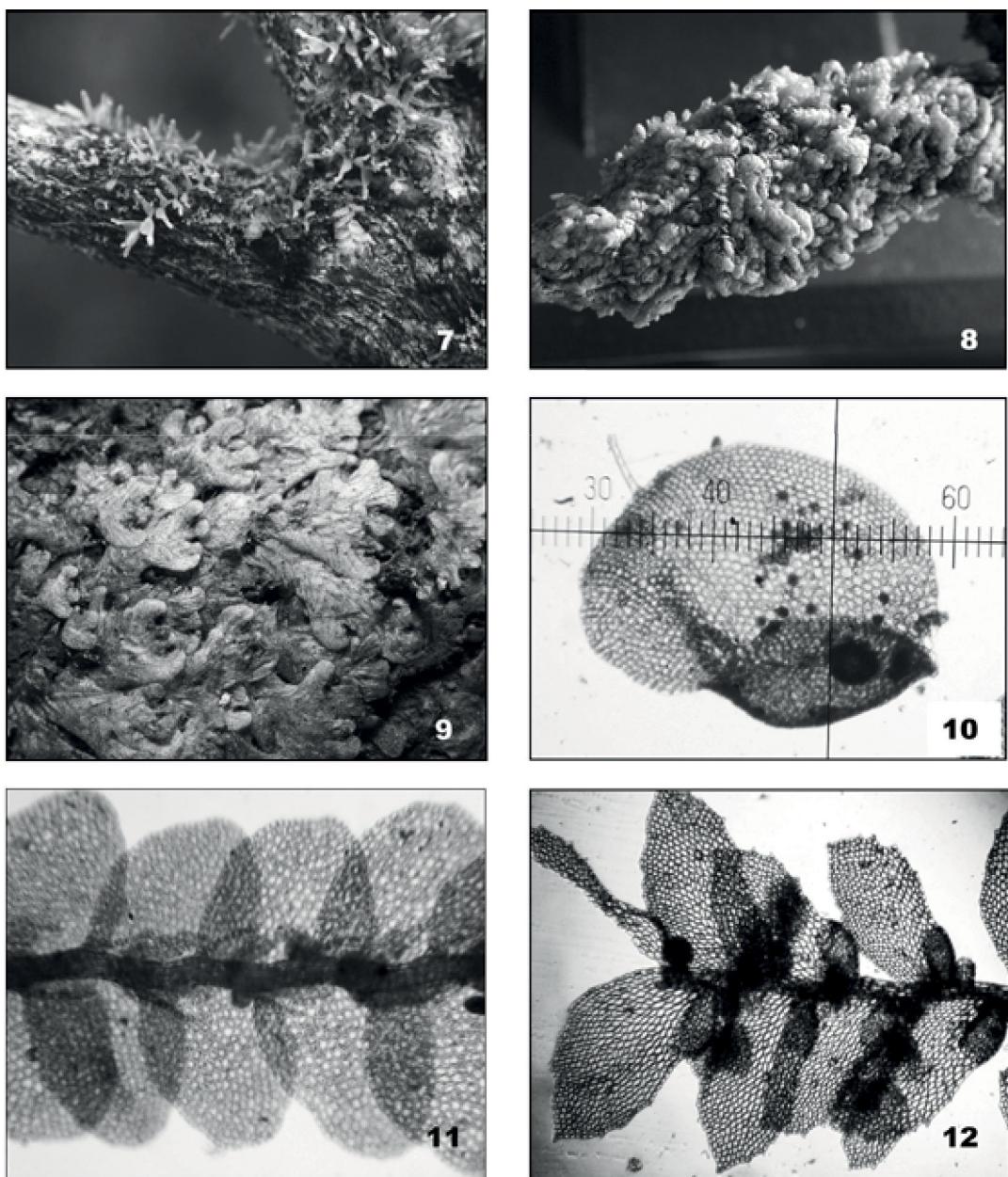
S ridge of Mt. M’Tsapéré, 1.7 km NNW from Vahibé village, 5 km W de Mamoudzou, along path ‘GR MT 1’, alt. 400 m, 12°46.34–46.39'S, 45°10.41–10.46'E, no. 05100/B, on shady, clayey ground in primary rainforest.

New to the Comoro Islands. A tropical West and Central African species unknown from continental East Africa. In the Indian Ocean islands previously known only from Madagascar.

Leptolejeunea subdentata Schiffn. ex Herzog (Figs. 2, 12)

Rés. For. de Mt. M’Tsapéré, NW ridge above of the Maison de Convalescence, alt. 450–520 m, 12°45.5–6'S, 45°11.11'E, no. 05077/AA, epiphyllous in mesic evergreen forest with *Olea capensis*, *Brexia madagascariensis* and *Procris pedunculata*; on the main ridge of Mt. Bénara at 500–660 m, 12°52.6'S, 45°09.6'E, no. 05106/BK, epiphyllous in mossy cloud forest.

New to the whole of tropical Africa. *Leptolejeunea subdentata* was previously known only from Asia: South China, Malaysia, Java, Borneo, Philippines and Vietnam, and from New Caledonia (Zhu & So 2001).



- Fig. 7: *Colura heimii* Ast on twigs in the mossy elfin forest, NW ridge of Mt. Bénara, at 660 m.
 Fig. 8: *Diplasiolejeunea rudolphiana* Steph. on twigs of the elfin forest on the west ridge of Mt. Choungui, at 500 m.
 Fig. 9: *Cyathodium africanum* Mitt. on shady roadcut, E slope of Mt.Tsapéré, at 350 m.
 Fig. 10. Leaf of *Diplasiolejeunea rudolphiana* Steph., from Mt. Choungui.
 Fig. 11. Ventral view of *Lejeunea pililoba* Spruce, from bark, Dapani Forest Reserve, at 200 m.
 Fig. 12. Ventral view of *Leptolejeunea subdentata* Schiffn. ex Herzog, from the Mt. Bénara ridge, at 550 m.

Notoscyphus lutescens (Lehm. & Lindenb.)
Mitt.

In the N part of Mayotte Island, E slope of Mt. Mapouéra, 3 km W de Dzoumonyé, alt. 160–170 m, 12°42.84'S, 45°05.625'E, no. 05085/B; S ridge of Mt. M'Tsapéré, NW du village de Vahibé, along path 'GR MT 1', alt. 225–370 m, 12°S, 45°E, no. 05098/D, on roadcuts.

New to Mayotte. Widespread palaeotropical species.

Plagiochila repanda (Schwägr.) Lindenb.

Rés. For. de Mt. M'Tsapéré, NW ridge above of the Maison de Convalescence, alt. 450–520 m, 12°45.5–6'S, 45°11.11'E, no. 05077/K, ramicolous in mesic evergreen forest; no. 05099/G, on bark.

New to Mayotte. Endemic to the Indian Ocean islands.

Solenostoma borgenii (Gottsche ex Pearson) Steph.

S ridge of Mt. M'Tsapéré, NNW du village de Vahibé, along path 'GR MT 1', alt. 370–400 m, 12°46'S, 45°10'E, nos. 05098/H and 05099/A, on half shady roadcuts (det. J. Váňa as *Jungermannia borgenii* Gottsche ex Pearson).

New to Mayotte. A tropical African species.

Tylimanthus laxus (Lehm. & Lindenb.) Spruce

On the main ridge of Mt. Bénara at 500–660 m, 12°52.52–52.64'S, 45°09.37–09.63'E, no. 05106/AV, on bark in submontane rainforest.

New to the Comoro Islands. A probably pantropical species.

Mosses

Archidium ohioense Schimp. ex Müll. Hal.

Petite Terre Islet, Dziani Dzaha crater, 2 km NE de Labattoir, alt. 40–60 m, 12°46.40'S, 45°16.86'E, no. 05107/B, on roadcut.

New to Mayotte. A subcosmopolitan species widespread in Africa.

Splachnobryum obtusum (Brid.) Müll. Hal.

Petite Terre Islet, between Plages de Moya and Labattoire, alt. 55 m, 12°46.88'S, 45°17.19'E, no. 05109/B, on half shady roadcut.

New to Mayotte. A pantropical species widespread in Africa.

Discussion

The species in this list represent different geographical elements. Although it is a selection of only a few species, it is striking that two of them are new to the whole of Africa. One of these, the Asian *Leptolejeunea subdentata* reaches only the Indian Ocean islands in Africa. There is a number of such geographical elements, indicating that the floristic border between continents is never too sharp, propagules by long range air dispersal can reach land masses of different distances. Pócs (1992) enumerates 18 such species, to which some more were added in the meantime. The other, *Lejeunea pililoba* is an Afro-American disjunct, which does not occur in mainland Africa (Pócs 2006a). This interesting connection was already discussed by Pócs (1999) and the species enumerated there could be either Gondwanan relics or their present distribution can be established in the result of long range air dispersal as well (Heinrichs *et al.* 2004). The bryophyte endemism of both Mayotte island itself and the whole Indian Ocean ar-

chipelago is pretty high, among epiphylls 37.7 % (Pócs 1997). From the above species, *Colura heimii* and *Plagiochila repanda* belong to this group.

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ACTA BRYOLICHENOLOGICA ASIATICA 3 (2010)

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