Three new species of *Begonia* endemic to the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Palawan

* Rosario Rivera Rubite, Mark Hughes, Patrick Blanc, Kuo-Fang Chung, Hsun-An Yang, Yoshiko Kono, Grecebio J D Alejandro, Llogene B De Layola, Arthur Gregory N Virata and Ching-I Peng

1 Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences, University of the Philippines Manila, Padre Faura, Manila 1000, Philippines
2 Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 20a Inverleith Row, Edinburgh EH3 5LR, UK
3 CNRS, 3 rue Michel-Ange, Paris, 75794, France
4 School of Forestry and Resource Conservation, National Taiwan University, Taipei 106, Taiwan
5 Biodiversity Research Center, Academia Sinica, Taipei 115, Taiwan
6 College of Science and Research Centre for the Natural and Applied Sciences, University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila 1015, Philippines

For all author emails, please log on.

*Botanical Studies* 2015, 56:19  doi:10.1186/s40529-015-0099-1

Published: 24 July 2015

**Abstract**

**Background**

*Begonia* is a mega-diverse genus of flowering plants prone to generating micro-endemic species, especially on limestone habitats. During fieldwork in the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Palawan (Philippines), three species were encountered which did not match any previously described from the region.

**Results**

Following morphological, anatomical, molecular phylogenetic and cytological investigation a hypothesis of three new species is supported. The three new species belong to a clade endemic to Palawan and Borneo.

**Conclusions**

The limestone habitats in the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park environs support a unique flora. The description of three new species from a small area within the park demonstrates how much remains to be discovered there, and the importance of its continued protection.

Keywords: Limestone; Endemic; New species; Conservation