

Aroid Profile No 10. *Taccarum weddellianum*

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Taccarum weddellianum Brongn. ex Schott
Genera Aroidearum 65. 1858

Synonym: *T. hasslerianum* Chodat

Terrestrial; tuber subterranean, depressed globose to 13 cm diam., light brown; roots numerous, spreading from top of tuber, tapered, elongate, 8-12 cm long, 3-5 mm diam.; cataphylls membranous, 1-ribbed, 13 cm long. LEAVES erect, solitary; petioles to 120 cm long, to 25 mm wide, erect, weakly D-shaped, the surface coarsely streaked green and white, the upper surface weakly sulcate; blades moderately thin, drying membranous, bipinnately compound, 40-50 cm long, 25-30 cm wide, broadest at or near point

of petiole attachment, the rachis greenish-white, round-raised below, the segments acute to rarely obtuse, oblong-elliptic to obovate, more reduced on the lower part of the pinnae, margins entire, the tissues decurrent on rachis; upper surface semiglossy; lower surface matte, paler, medium green. INFLORESCENCES solitary, erect, shorter than leaves; peduncle 7 cm long, 2.5 cm diam., pale green with medium green striations; spathe membranous, crinkled, pale green to creamy white, ovate, to 24 cm long, 20 cm wide, broadest in lower third, acuminate at apex, conspicuously convolute at base, the major veins light green, moderately raised,



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Fig. 1 Habit with leaf x 1/6. Munich Botanical Garden.

interconnected with close, almost parallel cross-veins; spadix white, club-shaped, erect, held at 45 degree angle from peduncle, 50 cm long, 5 cm diam. (including exerted flowers), broadest at the middle; the pistillate portion white, oblong, 14 cm long, 3.7 cm wide (stigma to stigma); staminate portion white, tapering, loosely flowered, to 35 cm length, to 5.4 cm diam., pistillate portion broadest near the base; the female flowers naked, arranged in spirals, moderately remote from one another, contiguous or up to 5 mm apart, 6-8 flowers per spiral; pistils matte to weakly glossy, green; style conspicuous, 4.5-5.0 mm long, white, tapered to apex, 0.5 mm diam. below stigma; stigma depressed globose, 6 lobed, 2.7-3 mm long; the ovary depressed-globose, sometimes obscurely 4-lobed (surrounded by club-shaped staminodia), to 4 mm long, 5-8 mm diam., 5 locular; the fertile staminate flowers in up to 21 spirals, 1-2.1 cm long, the synandrium lobed, truncate at apex, 6 per spiral; anthers grayish, 3 mm long, 1.5-2 mm wide, contiguous; thecae oblong, 0.5-1 mm wide, white contiguous; pollen yellow (B & K yellow-red 8/7.5), spheroidal, spiky. INFRUCTESCENCE not seen.

Taccarum weddellianum ranges from southern Brazil (Acre, Matto Grosso) to Bolivia and Paraguay, occurring in seasonally dry habitats, where the plants

lose their solitary leaf during all or part of the dry season.

A plant collected by Jim Solomon in Bolivia and cultivated at the Missouri Botanical Garden produced a new leaf in September and shortly thereafter produced a solitary inflorescence. While at anthesis, the flowers produced an undiscernible tangy aroma, which though moderately strong, was neither sweet nor foul.

The genus *Taccarum* is a member of the subfamily Aroideae, tribe Spathicarpeae (formerly Asterostigmatae), a group which has largely terrestrial, usually tuberous, mostly poorly known species. *Taccarum* is a genus of only six species, but most related genera have even fewer species, with *Scaphyspatha*, *Spathanthemum* and *Synandrospadix* all being monotypic (i.e. with only one species), while *Mangonia* and *Gorgonidium* have only two species. *Asterostigma*, with five species and *Spathicarpa* with seven species are roughly the size of *Taccarum*. Most of these genera occur in the southern part of tropical South America and subtropical South America. Five of them range as far south as northern Argentina. Despite the small size of the group, the tribe Spathicarpeae is among the most interesting and poorly known groups of the aroid family and other species should be described in the series.



Fig. 2 Habit with inflorescence x 1/4.
Solomon 13519.



Fig. 3 Inflorescence showing spathe,
apex of pistillate spadix and base
of staminate spadix x 2/3.
Solomon 13519.

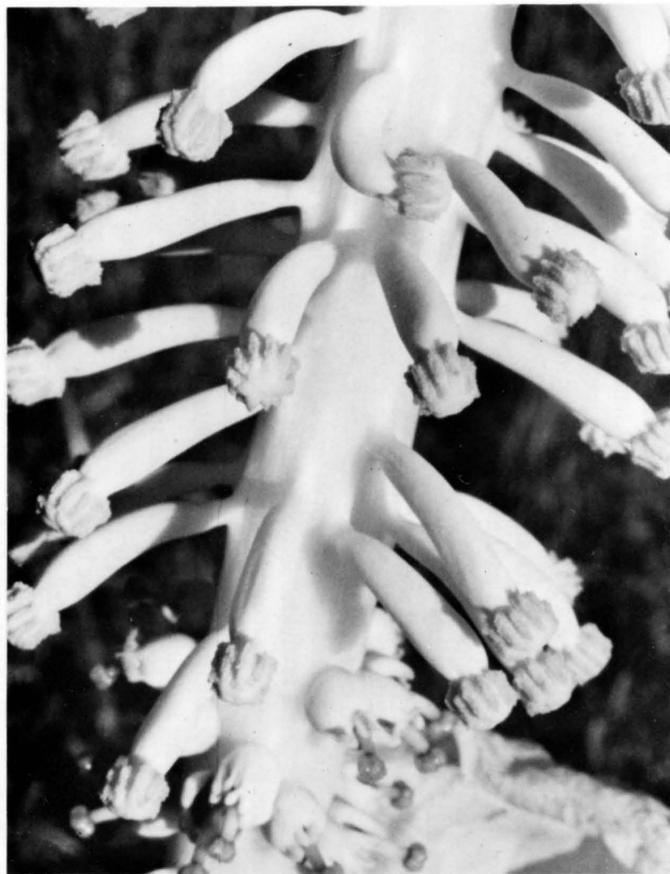


Fig. 5 Closeup of staminate flowers showing open anthers x 1½. *Solomon 13519*.



Fig. 4 Closeup of pistillate portion of spadix showing pistils surrounded by club-shaped staminodia x 1½. *Solomon 13519*.