A new variety of *Jacquemontia solanifolia* from Puerto Rico?

JOSÉ A. MARI MUT

A new variety of *Jacquemontia solanifolia* from Puerto Rico?

During a casual late-December morning stroll along the trails of the *Merendero Guajataca*, a nature and picnic area in Quebradillas, northwest Puerto Rico, I encountered the very attractive crimson flowers of the native and rather uncommon vine *Jacquemontia solanifolia* (Convolvulaceae), and the equally attractive white flowers of an evidently closely related plant that I had not seen before.

On the following day (December 29th) I returned to show the new plant to an excited Dr. Miguel (Papo) Vives; on the 30th to take the photographs included here; and again on the 31st, this time with naturalist/botanist Steve Maldonado Silvestrini (who collected material for the herbarium of the Río Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico), botanist Dr. Amelia Merced, and naturalist Gabriel E. Muriente Pastrana. Steve and I found a second plant with white flowers and Gabriel found a third. Gabriel also found another plant with crimson flowers. I returned to the area on January 3rd 2020 and walked all the trails without finding additional plants. The three white-flowered plants grew on trees, one crimson-flowered plant grew on a tree and the other (plant 4th below, top left on the map) grew on low-lying bushes.

Plant	Trail	Approximate coordinates
White flowers	Mariposa quebradillana	18.490369, -66.949809
White flowers	Mariposa quebradillana	18.490359, -66.949919
White flowers	Mariposa quebradillana	18.490403, -66.950093
Crimson flowers	End of mariposa quebradillana	18.490449, -66.950964
Crimson flowers	Palo de rosa	18.489835, -66.950913

A comparison of the white-flowered and the crimson-flowered plants suggested that they belong to different varieties (if not separate species). Aside from the obvious difference in flower color, the corolla of the white flowers have smaller lobes and the stems of these plants are green and almost naked (vs. golden to reddish and hairy). Also, the presence of three plants with white flowers ,plus the observation that all five plants were visited by pollinators and produced seeds suggest the existence of an established population with consistent characters. In addition, Dr. Vives Heyliger told me that about 25 years ago he found in this picnic area a *J. solanifolia* with white flowers, but after so many years he could not remember its exact location.

Both the crimson-flowered plants and the white-flowered ones (with the exceptions noted above) agree with the description of *J. solanifolia* provided by Acevedo-Rodríguez in *Bejucos y Plantas Trepadoras de Puerto Rico e Islas Vírgenes* (Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., 490 pp.).

Rather than let my observations and photographs languish in a computer and be lost with time, I have decided to publish them with the hope that someone better-equipped and, with the desire and time to study the plants, will find these notes, become motivated and accurately determine the taxonomic status of the white-flowered individuals; for which, if they represent a new variety or species, the simple and euphonious name *albiflora* is suggested.

Locations of white-flowered plants (gray) and crimson-flowered plants (red).