

**ASARUM HARPERI: A NEW COMBINATION FOR A HEXASTYLIS
(ARISTOLOCHIACEAE) TAXON**

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ABSTRACT

A new combination and change in status in the genus *Asarum* is proposed for *Asarum shuttleworthii* Britten & Baker f. var. *harperi* (Gaddy) Barringer. ***Asarum harperi*** (Gaddy) Diamond, **comb. nov.**, provides a name for this taxon at species rank.

The genus *Hexastylis* (Aristolochiaceae) is characterized by having sepals fused into a tube, extrorse stamens, and bifurcate style extensions (Blomquist 1957). It comprises about 14 taxa (Kartesz 2015), all restricted to eastern North America (Whittemore & Gaddy 1997). Recent molecular studies, however, have questioned the recognition of *Hexastylis* as a distinct genus, subsuming it into a broadly circumscribed *Asarum* that includes the closely related Asian genera *Heterotropa*, *Geotaenium*, and *Asiasarum* (Kelly 1997, 1998; Sinn et al. 2015a, 2015b). The concept of a more broad treatment of *Asarum* supports the earlier assertion of Barringer who (1993), transferred all *Hexastylis* taxa to *Asarum* that had not previously been treated as such.

One of the taxa transferred to *Asarum* by Barringer (1993) was *Hexastylis shuttleworthii* (Britten & Baker f.) Small var. *harperi* Gaddy, a narrow endemic of the southeastern USA (Kartesz 2015). In his transfer, it was maintained at varietal rank as *Asarum shuttleworthii* var. *harperi* (Gaddy) Barringer. Keener and Davenport (2015) justified the elevation of *Hexastylis shuttleworthii* Britten & Baker f. var. *harperi* to species rank as *H. harperi* (Gaddy) B.R. Keener & L.J. Davenp. However, such elevation creates a situation where the same natural entity is treated as a species in *Hexastylis* but as a variety in *Asarum*. I concur with the specific rank recommended by Keener and Davenport and propose the following new name to accommodate recognition of this taxon within *Asarum*.

Asarum harperi (Gaddy) Diamond, **comb. nov.** *Hexastylis shuttleworthii* (Britten & Baker f.) Small var. *harperi* Gaddy, Sida 12: 54. 1987. *Asarum shuttleworthii* Britten & Baker f. var. *harperi* (Gaddy) Barringer, Novon 3: 226. 1993. *Hexastylis harperi* B.R. Keener & L.J. Davenp., J. Bot. Res. Inst. Texas 9: 317. 2015.

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