A new record of *Rhododendron keiskei* Miq. var. hypoglaucum Suto & Suzuki (Ericaceae) in Korea

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**ABSTRACT:** *Rhododendron keiskei* Miq. var. *hypoglaucum* Suto & Suzuki (Ericaceae) was found in Yeosu-si, Jeollanam-do, Korea. This species is distinguished from related taxa in Korea by lepidote hairs entire, flower-bud terminal, inflorescences umbel-like racemes, corolla lepidot outside, white tinged with yellow. This taxon was named ‘Seom-Jin-Dal-Lae’ in Korean based on its habitat. We provide its description, illustrations, photographs and a key of related taxa in Korea.

**Keywords:** *Rhododendron keiskei* var *hypoglaucum*, Ericaceae, new record, Korea

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*Rhododendron* Linnaeus (Ericaceae Juss.) includes about 1,000 taxa and is widely distributed in Asia, Europe, North America (Fang et al., 2005). Since the genus was established by Linnaeus, its infrageneric relationships have been well studied by many taxonomists. Sleumer (1949) divided the genus into 8 subgenera and Cullen (1980) and Chamberlain (1982) divided it into 5 subgenera. Recently Fang et al.(2005) and Yamazaki (1996) divided it into 9 subgenera.

Twenty three taxa of *Rhododendron* are distributed in the wild in Korea(Korea National Arboretum et al. 2014). During an expedition to the south island in korea, We found an unrecorded species of *Rhododendron*. This species is characterized by evergreen and entire leaves with lepidote hairs, flower-bud terminal and single, flower white tinged with yellow. After studying the unidentified specimen and literature, we concluded it represents *Rhododendron keiskei* Miq. var. *hypoglaucum* Suto & Suzuki within section *Rhododendron* of subgenus *Rhododendron* (Yamazaki, 1996). So far it has been a endemic plant of Japan. In this study, *Rhododendron keiskei* Miq. var. *hypoglaucum* Suto & Suzuki is reported as a newly founded taxon in Korea. In addition, we provide its description, illustrations, photographs and a key of related taxa.

**Description**

*Rhododendron keiskei* Miq. var. *hypoglaucum* Suto &

Dwarf evergreen shrubs 30–50 cm tall (rarely 2 m). Lepidote hairs entire. Leaves elliptic to elliptic-oblong, 2–5.5 cm long, 1–2.5 cm wide, obtuse or subacute at apex, glaucous beneath. Flower-bud terminal, single (rarely 2–3), oblong-ovate. Inflorescences umbel-like racemes, with 2–6 flowers. Corolla white tinged with yellow, funnel-shaped, ca. 2.5 cm long, 3 cm wide, sparsely lepidote outside. Stamens 10–12, irregular, similar or slightly longer than corolla. Ovary oblong-lanceolate, densely lepidote. Style slightly curved, longer than corolla, glabrous. Capsule cylindric, straight, 10–13 mm long, 2–3 mm wide, densely lepidote. Seeds oblong, ca. 1 mm long, with a short appendage on an other side (Figs. 1, 2).

Flowering: April to May
Distribution: Japan (Honshu) and Korea (Samsan-myeon, Yeosu-si).
Voucher specimens: Korea, Jeollanam-do, Yeosu-si, Samsan-myeon, 16 May. 2012, S. J. Ji 12051401 (3 sheets, KH); 15 Apr. 2015. J. C. Yang 15041501 (5 sheets, KH).

Note: *R. keiskei* var. *hypoglaucum* is very similar to *R. lapponicum* subsp. *parvifolium* (Adams) T.Yamaz. among Korean *Rhododendron*. But the former is distinguished from the latter by having leaves more than 2 cm and corolla lepidote outside, white. it was found in south island of korea and mostly grows at rock cliffs on mountain. We could not exactly count the number of *R. keiskei* var. *hypoglaucum* due to the rugged terrain. But We guess there are hundreds of it in habitat. It was usually found on the north slope of the island and in the evergreen bushes together with *Raphiolepis indica* var. *umbellata* (Thunb.) Ohashi, *Ligustrum japonicum* Thunb., *Camellia japonica* L., *Litsea japonica* (Thunb.) Juss. etc. In Japan this species have a very limited distribution at Honshu (Kanto) (Yamazaki, 1996; Ministry of the Environment, 2012a) (Fig. 3). Ministry of the Environment (2012b) reported that *R. keiskei* var. *hypoglaucum* is assumed less than 200 individual in Japan. This species was named ‘Seom-Jin-Dal-Lae’ in Korean based on its habitat.

Fig. 1. Photographs of *Rhododendron keiskei* var. *hypoglaucum*. A, B. Plant habit (A: Flowering, B: Fruiting); C, D. Flowers; E. Fruits; F. Flower-bud.
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A key to *R. keiskei* var. hypoglaucum and its related taxa

1. Flower-buds clustered in axils of approximate upper leaves or scales, each bud generally producing a single flower
   - *R. mucronulatum* (진달래), *R. dauricum* (산진달래)
2. Inflorescences with 1−6 flowers in umbel-like racemes; corolla zygomorphic
3. Leaves more than 2 cm long (shorter in *R. keiskei* var. ozawae); corolla lepidote outside, white or yellow
4. Leaves elliptic, apex obtuse to subacute, glaucous beneath
5. Branches divaicate, 10−20 cm tall; leaves 1.5−2.5 cm long; corolla yellow
   - *R. keiskei* var. hypoglaucum

3. Leaves less than 2 cm long; corolla glabrous outside, violet
2. Inflorescences with 10–30 flowers in corymbose racemes; corolla actinomorphic
   - *R. lapponicum* subsp. parvifolium (황산차)

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Literature Cited


