

Subject:
Re: Darwin Seim's 1965 *Potentilla*
From:
Carolyn Parker <clparker@alaska.edu>
Date:
Mon, 14 Mar 2011 19:53:24 -0800
To:
Alan Batten <alanbatten@acsalaska.net>, Jordan Metzgar <jsmetzgar@alaska.edu>

Hi A!!!!

Boy, I hope you have other things to do this spring! Lovely as it has been so far.

Thanks for keeping in touch with the *Elodea* project.

I know I talked with Darwin on the phone a few years ago, and he admitted he was not sure.... but he did remember that he had dashed from Steese Hiway to Nunivak that summer (1965) and that some specimens may have been left in his press. And he may have gotten confused as to where they were from later in the fall when he was back in Fairbanks. (Fits in with the Darwin I know.) And I do remember the specimen as being big, gorgeous (coastal-looking) *P. villosa* for sure. So I was very suspicious that it was indeed from Nunivak after talking with him. My idea might be to pull this specimen out as suspicious (maybe even delete from Arctos for now?) and maybe think of checking next summer at both the suspect sites.... and if needed, just toss this specimen(s)? I suspect we have other *P. villosa*'s from Nunivak to document its distribution there, so tossing Darwin's sheet would not be a real loss in 'information'. Same for the Richardson Hiway Mile 92 specimen. Was that specimen annotated? Could well be *P. villosula* actually, depending on where Mile 92 is. Bluffs around the Copper River? High elevation?

Anyway.... I have copied this to Jordan so he can follow our thought-process. Glad you are picking thru this pile. I have my own odds and ends pile at the lab, and am making very slow progress!

Carolyn

On Mon, Mar 14, 2011 at 1:59 PM, Alan Batten <alanbatten@acsalaska.net> wrote:

Hi Carolyn,

I am very slowly going through the pile of plants next to my computer in the Herbarium. I have come to ALAacc 31960. Reidar has identified it as *P. villosa*, and it looks like *P. villosa*. The label indicates that it was collected by Darwin Seim on 6 July 1965 from 38 Mile Steese Highway. There is a yellow sticky tag on the specimen, possibly put there by you, that says that the locality in Arctos is given as Nunivak Island for this specimen.

I have checked around a little and found the following. The 4D database also gives the locality of this specimen as Nunivak Island, so the Arctos locality is not the result of some freaky upload error. Based on other specimens in Arctos, on 6 July 1965 and the days before and after, Darwin was collecting in the Fairbanks area, specifically along the Steese Highway (mostly the Eagle Summit area). However, he was on Nunivak Island from 2 August to 11 August. If I map all the *Potentilla villosa* specimens in Arctos, none are from the Interior. The closest one to Fairbanks is one collected from Mile 92 Richardson Highway (also collected by Darwin Seim in June 1965).

I believe that the Steese Highway bridge over the Chatanika River is at mile 39. I believe that there is a ridge coming down from the right just before the bridge which might have some outcrops on it at a fairly low elevation. I suppose I could try to check that ridge out this summer, but even given the existence of that ridge, that area doesn't seem like it would provide a very likely habitat for *Potentilla villosa*.

I have a vague recollection that you called Darwin on the telephone a few years back and talked with him about his itinerary. I am thinking that we may have purposely logged this specimen as a Nunivak Island specimen, though I'm very surprised that we didn't put any notes in the data to explain what we did.

I am thinking that our best guess as to where this specimen actually came from might very well be Nunivak Island. I am thinking of condensing all the preceding logic into a note in the Arctos data, and printing a new label showing Nunivak Island as the collecting locality (with caveats). Do you think that would be appropriate? Do you remember anything about this specimen (I have it here at home right now)?

Thanks!

AI