

Largest flower preserved in amber from over 33 million years ago

January 12 2023



Fossil flower of *Symplocos kowalewskii* (Symplocaceae) from Baltic amber – to date, by far the largest floral inclusion discovered from any amber. Credit: Carola Radke, MfN (Museum für Naturkunde Berlin)

New images of the largest-known fossilized flower to be preserved in

amber—which at 28 millimeters across is nearly three times the size of other preserved flowers—are published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

The preserved flower, encased in [amber](#) from the Baltic forests of northern Europe, dates from almost 40 million years ago and is thought to be from an ancient flowering evergreen plant originally called *Stewartia kowalewskii*.

Eva-Maria Sadowski and Christa-Charlotte Hofmann reanalyzed the exceptionally large fossilized flower, which was originally described and named in 1872. The flower is dated to the Late Eocene, from between 38 million to 33.9 million years ago.

The authors extracted [pollen](#) from the sample and their analysis suggests that the flower is closely related to the Asian species of *Symplocos*. The authors propose a new name for the flower of *Symplocos kowalewskii*.

The authors propose that the rare size of *S. kowalewskii* is likely from a large resin outpouring which would have encased the flower. The properties of the resin would have helped to prevent organisms growing on the flower and causing damage, they add.



Fossil flower of *Symplocos kowalewskii* (Symplocaceae) from Baltic amber – to date, by far the largest floral inclusion discovered from any amber. Credit: Carola Radke, MfN (Museum für Naturkunde Berlin)



Fossil flower of *Symplocos kowalewskii* (Symplocaceae) from Baltic amber – to date, by far the largest floral inclusion discovered from any amber. Credit: Carola Radke, MfN (Museum für Naturkunde Berlin)

More information: Eva-Maria Sadowski, The largest amber-preserved flower revisited, *Scientific Reports* (2023). [DOI: 10.1038/s41598-022-24549-z](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-24549-z).
www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-24549-z

Provided by Nature Publishing Group

Citation: Largest flower preserved in amber from over 33 million years ago (2023, January 12) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-01-largest-amber-million-years.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.