

A NEW SPECIES OF *THORNCROFTIA*

Thorncroftia media Codd, sp. nov., a *T. succulenta* (Dyer & Bruce) Codd pubescentia pilis simplicibus, foliis subintegris, inflorescentia laxiora differt.

Frutex semisucculentus, c. 0,6 m altus, basi ramosus; caules erecti, parce ramosi, teretes, demum glabrescentes. *Folia* petiolata, semisucculenta; lamina elliptica vel ovato-elliptica, 35–65 × 25–35 mm, utrinque tomentosa et glanduloso-punctata pilis simplicibus, apice rotundato, basi cuneata, margine subintegra; petiolus 20–30 mm longus. *Inflorescentia* terminalis, paniculata, satis condensata, usque ad 250 mm longa, 100 mm lata; rhachis glanduloso-tomentosa; bracteae persistentes, basi racemi foliaceae, superne sensim reductae demum c. 4 mm

longae, floribus axillaribus solitariis, pedicellis 1–2 mm longis. *Calyx* campanulatus, glandulosus, aliquantum bilabiatus, demum 5–6 mm longus; lobus posticus ovato-deltaeus, 2 mm longus; lobus anticus subaequaliter 4-dentatus, dentibus lanceolato-deltaeis, acuminatis, 1,5 mm longis. *Corolla* tubulosa, apice 4-lobata, lilacina, lobis purpureo-maculatis; tubus anguste cylindricus, 20–22 mm longus, 2 mm diam., leviter compressus, breviter glanduloso-tomentosus; lobus posticus erectus, obcordatus 5–6 × 4 mm, lobi laterales deflexi, lineari-lanceolati, acuminati, 5–6 × 1 mm; lobus anticus cymbiformis, 6–7 mm longus, demum reflexus. *Stamina* 4, filamentis liberis, 3–4 mm longis, fauce corollae insertis.

Ovarium 4-lobatum, glabrum; stylus filiformis, 7 mm exsertus; stigma breviter bifidum.

TYPE.—Transvaal, Drakensberg range, west of Trichardtsdal (2430CC), cultivated in BRI nursery, Hardy 3966 (PRE, holo.).

Semi-succulent shrub, c. 0,6 m tall, branching at the base; stems erect, sparingly branched, terete, eventually glabrescent. *Leaves* petiolate, semi-succulent; blade elliptical to ovate-elliptical, 35–65 × 25–35 mm, tomentose and gland-dotted on both surfaces with simple hairs, apex rounded, base cuneate, margin subentire; petiole 20–30 mm long. *Inflorescence* terminal, paniculate, fairly dense, up to 250 mm long, 100 mm broad; rhachis glandular-tomentose; bracts persistent, those at the base of the raceme leaf-like, becoming smaller towards the apex and eventually c. 4 mm long, with the flowers axillary, solitary, pedicels 1–2 mm long. *Calyx* campanulate, glandular, somewhat bilabiate, eventually 5–6

mm long; posticous lobe ovate-deltoid, 2 mm long; anticous lobe subequally 4-toothed, teeth lanceolate-deltoid, acuminate, 1,5 mm long. *Corolla* tubular with the apex 4-lobed, lilac with the lobes purple-flecked; tube narrowly cylindrical, 20–22 mm long, 2 mm in diam., slightly compressed, shortly glandular-tomentose; posticous lobe erect, obcordate, 5–6 × 4 mm; lateral lobes deflexed, linear-lanceolate, acuminate, 5–6 × 1 mm; anticous lobe cymbiform, 6–7 mm long, eventually reflexed. *Stamens* 4, filaments free, 3–4 mm long, attached in the throat of the corolla. *Ovary* 4-lobed, glabrous; style filiform, exserted by 7 mm; stigma shortly bifid. Fig. 12.

Known only from the type gathering (Hardy 966), collected on rocky slopes of the Drakensberg Range in the eastern Transvaal, north-west of the Olifants River poort and more or less due west of Trichardtsdal, and cultivated in the BRI nursery. Access to this part of the Drakensberg Range is difficult, as there are no roads into the mountains between the Olifants River and the road over the mountains at The Downs, some 45 km to the north-west. The opportunity to make a small collection in the area arose when Mr Hardy accompanied a helicopter expedition engaged on the eradication of *Cannabis* plantings.

In corolla characters and growth habit *T. media* resembles *T. succulenta* but, in the latter species, the leaf blade tends to be smaller (16–30 × 15–20 mm) with the margin crenate in the upper half, and the tomentum on leaves and stems consists mainly of dendroid hairs. In *T. succulenta* the inflorescence is also smaller and denser than in *T. media*. *T. succulenta* occurs on the Soutpansberg and has been recorded on the escarpment opposite Mariepskop and from the mountains east of Barberton. It is possible, therefore, that it may occur at other localities along the eastern escarpment but, in the short time at his disposal, Mr Hardy did not encounter it. Obviously more information is desirable on the distribution of the two species and whether there is any intergradation between them, but there seems to be little chance of further study being possible in this mountainous area in the near future.

Another related species, *T. longiflora* N.E. Br., which has so far been recorded only from the mountains above Joe's Luck Siding east of Barberton, has a similar greyish tomentum of simple hairs but the leaves are very much smaller (10–20 × 4–10) and the corolla tube is considerably longer (30–38 mm) than in *T. media*.



FIG. 12. — Holotype of *Thorncroftia media*, Hardy 3966.