

NYCTAGINACEAE

THE IDENTITY OF *BOERHAAVIA PTEROCARPA* IN SOUTH AFRICA

The correct name of the plants referred to as *Boerhaavia pterocarpa* S. Wats. in South Africa is *B. cordobensis* Kuntze. *B. pterocarpa* was first recorded as a weed in South Africa by Codd in 1966 (*Bothalia* 9: 113–121). In discussing its identity he commented that the specimens available to him for study were 'an excellent match of the type of *B. cordobensis* Kuntze, which comes from the Argentine'. He also noted, however, that '... a specimen of *Leistner* 1084 was sent to the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University, where it was reported to be an almost perfect match of the type of *B. pterocarpa* S. Wats.'. It was the latter, incorrect assessment which led him to accept the name *B. pterocarpa* S. Wats. (*Proc. Am. Acad.* 17: 376, 1882) over *B. cordobensis* Kuntze (*Rev. Gen.* 3,2: 264, 1898). However, as these two names refer to two distinct taxa it becomes necessary to call the South African material *B. cordobensis*.

An easily detected difference between *B. pterocarpa* and *B. cordobensis* lies in the side walls of the fruit. In *B. pterocarpa* the side walls of the

fruit are corrugated, evident from even an early stage of development, whereas in *B. cordobensis* they are smooth. *B. pterocarpa* does not occur in

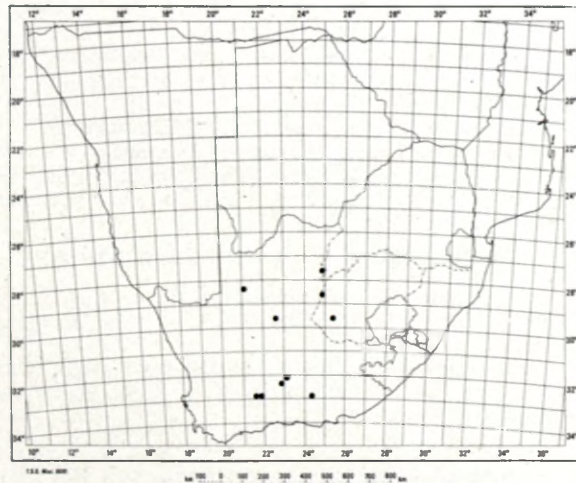


FIG. 14.—Known distribution of *Boerhaavia cordobensis* in South Africa.

South Africa. The distribution of *B. cordobensis* is given in Fig. 14.

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