

COMMELINACEAE

TWO NEW SPECIES OF *COMMELINA*

***Commelina bella* Oberm.**, sp. nov. *C. livingstonii* affinis, sed planta majora, robustiora, foliis ad marginem crenulatis, albis, racemo inferiore, 1–3-floribus, longe pedunculato valde differt.

Herba perennis (chamaephyta), erecta, compacta, setulosa, ad 350 mm alta. *Caudex* compactus, radicibus lignosis longis. *Folia* linearia 40–50 × 10 mm, margine undulato incrassato albo. *Spathae* 1–2, ad apicem ramorum sessiles. *Cymae* 2; inferiora 1–2-flora; stipes c. 25 mm longus, setulosus; cyma superiora c. 3–4-flora. *Flores* grandes, pallide caerulei, lilacini vel albi. *Petala* c. 20 mm. *Stamina* typica; anthera caerulea; staminodia antherodiis bulbosis flavidis. *Capsula* oblongo-globosa, dura.

TYPE.—Transvaal, 2428, (Nylstroom): 20 km S of Warmbaths on Great North Road (–CD), along roadside, *Smook 1494* (PRE, holo.).

Sturdy compact bushes (chamaephytes) c. 0,35 m tall, setulose with short white setae; with a hard gnarled rootcrown and long firm woody roots. *Stems* erect, firm, with internodes c. 50 mm long. *Leaves* linear, c. 40–50 × 10 mm, apex sharply acuminate-

recurved, base merging into a short open sheath, light greyish-green, margin undulate, forming a thick white rim. *Spathes* terminal, opposite upper leaves, sessile, funnel-form, triangular, apex acute to acuminate, recurved, c. 25 mm long. *Cymes* 2; lower cyme much exserted on a hairy peduncle c. 25 mm long, 1–2-flowered, male; upper cyme c. 3–4-flowered, bisexual. *Flowers* pale blue, lilac or white, large. *Petals* c. 20 mm. *Stamens* 3, two with normal blue locules, the central curled with a large connective; filaments white; staminodes with purple filaments and orange-yellow antherodes consisting of 4 bulbous bodies and 2 smaller ones. *Capsule* oblong-globose, hard, c. 10 mm, 3-seeded; seeds smooth. (No well developed capsule seen.) Fig. 2.

Recorded from the Springbok Flats in the Transvaal in turf soil. Flowering November–January.

TRANSSAAL.—2428 (Nylstroom): 20 km S of Warmbaths on Great North Road (–CB), *Smook 1494*; Warmbaths (–CD), *Burt Davy 2232*; Singlewood Halt (–DB), *Mauve 4279*. 2527 (Rustenburg); near Brits (–DB), *Emmenis in PRE 38063*. 2528 (Pretoria): Rust de Winter (–BA), *Pole Evans 3852*.



FIG. 2.—*Commelina bella*. Smook 1494, holotype in PRE.

***Commelina modesta* Oberm., sp. nov.** *C. livingstonii* affinis, sed planta minora, laxa, glabra vel glabrescens; spathis floriferis solitariis ad apicem ramorum; laminae folii basin versus sensim in vaginam attenuata differt.

Herba perennis (chamaephyta), erecta, laxa ramosa. Caulex compactus, radicibus longis lignosis. Rami tenues, internodiis elongatis. Folia linearia, c. 80(–100) × 4(–10) mm, plana, glabra vel pauce glabriuscula, lamina basin versus sensim in vaginam

attenuata. *Spatha* singularia, ad apicem ramorum, sessilis, infundibuliformis, triangularis, apice acuta. *Cyma* solitaria. *Flores* parvi, albi vel caerulei. *Cap-sula* 3-locularis; loculi globosi, laevigati; semina globosa, laevigata.

TYPE.—Transvaal, 2531 (Komatipoort): Barber-ton, lower hill slopes (–CC), *Galpin* 808 (PRE, holo.).

Small spreading, diffusely branched, glabrescent bushes (chamaephytes) up to c. 0.3 m tall. *Rootstock* woody, gnarled, knobby (the knobs presenting remains of swollen bases of annual stems); roots woody, long, initially covered by a velamen of root-hairs. *Stems* several, erect, with long internodes up to 60–100 mm long. 1–2 mm in diam. *Leaves* with lamina linear, flat, 80–100 × 4–10 mm, attenuated at the base into a pseudo-petiole, white-punctulate; sheath membranous, subauriculate. *Flowering spathe* solitary (rarely 2), apical, sessile or nearly so, funnel-form, shortly triangular, 15 mm long, 10 mm broad, apex short, acute, minutely puberulous and with scattered white setae. *Cyme* solitary. *Flowers* small, blue or white (“pink” fide *Galpin* 808). *Sepals* ovate, c. 5 mm, membranous, upper minute. *Petals*: upper one rounded, c. 15 mm ventral ones minute. *Stamens* typical, the anthers occasionally with dark margins, the central semicircular; staminodes with yellow bulbous antherodes. *Capsule* with globose, shiny, cream-coloured locules; seeds globose, 5 mm, smooth, farinaceous, dorsal seed occasionally aborted.

Widespread in Transvaal, Natal and Swaziland, in rocky habitats. Flowering November–March.

TRANSSAAL.—2230 (Messina): Sand River workings (–AC), *Wild* 7624 (SRGH, PRE). 2330 Tzaneen: Mbayimbayi (–BB), *Lang* in TRV 32230 (PRE). 2428 (Nylsroom): Nylsvley Ecosystem Research Station (–DA), *Smook* 1491. 2527 (Rustenburg): Rustenburg (–CA), *Van Dam* in TRV 19714 (PRE). 2528 (Pretoria): Pretoria, Schanskop (–CA), *Leemann* 51 (PRE). 2530 (Lydenburg): Lowveld Botanic Garden, Nelspruit (–BD), *Buitendag* 371 (NBG, PRE).

NATAL.—2632 (Bella Vista): Nkonjane-Aberkorn Drift (–CC), *Moll & Pooley* 4197 (NH). 2731 (Louwsburg): Itala Nature Reserve (–CB), *McDonald* 332 (PRE, NH). 2732 (Ubombo): mountain pass near Josini Dam, *Stirton* 498 (PRE). 3030 (Port Shepstone): Gibraltar (–CB), *Strey* 10343 (PRE, NH).

This species was usually placed under *C. livingstonii* C. B. Cl., but is a more slender bush found in rocky habitats. The leaves narrow gradually below into a pseudo-petiole, whereas in *C. livingstonii* they widen below and then narrow abruptly into the sheath.