

BLECHNACEAE

FIRST RECORD OF *STENOCHLAENA TENUIFOLIA* (DESV.) MOORE FOR THE TRANSVAAL

Stenochlaena tenuifolia is a scandent fern, largely confined to the east coast of Africa from Kenya in the north to the eastern Cape Province in the south. All the South African specimens in PRE were collected practically within sight of the Indian Ocean. The species typically occurs in coastal swamp forest, climbing against rocks and trees to a height of 30 m. Fig. 7 illustrates the known range of the species in Southern Africa according to specimens in PRE and the locality records given by Schelpe in Fl. Zamb. Pteridophyta 242 (1970), which could be traced on maps.

In 1968 a sterile specimen was collected on the farm Fourieskraal near Barberton, fully 120 km from the sea, by Mr M. J. van Biljon, acting on information supplied by Mr D. A. Jackson of Louws Creek Timbers. The specimen was taken at the small Mhlambanyathi Creek near the ruin of the old home-stead at an altitude of about 550 m. In March 1975 one of us (J.C.S.) visited the site and collected fertile material. The plants were growing in a small stand of humid "swamp forest" on leached coarse sandy alluvium reminiscent of sites on the coastal plain of Zululand and Mozambique. Important associated trees were *Syzygium cordatum* Hochst., *Bridelia micrantha* (Hochst.) Baill., *Anthocleista grandiflora* Gilg and *Rauvolfia caffra* Sond. The fern was creeping over litter on the forest floor and up against tree trunks.

Because of its close proximity to the ruined home-stead, it might conceivably have been introduced, but the plants appear to be growing so naturally in the forest, that the species is considered to be indigenous to the area.

TRANSVAAL.—2531 (Komatipoort): near Barberton (—CB),
Van Biljon sub PRE 38955; Scheepers 2401.

J. C. SCHEEPERS & P. VORSTER

