

THE *RIOCREUXIA FLANAGANII* COMPLEX

My work on the genus *Riocreuxia* for the Flora of Southern Africa has left me as undecided as regards the concept of some species as apparently were R. Schlechter, K. Schumann and N. E. Brown in the past. Under the species *R. torulosa* Decne, Brown wrote in Fl. Cap. 4, 2: 803 (1908) that the corona of this plant varies considerably, or that more than one species is included; and under *R. bolusii* Brown commented that in its broad leaves and the more cyme-like character of its inflorescence the species resembles (*R. polycantha* Schltr.) = *R. burchellii* K. Schum., but he added that the leaves are thinner and the corona entirely different, being more like that of *R. torulosa*.

Had not Brown given *Bolus* 10194 species rank, I should have been satisfied to classify it under *R. torulosa* with which it was collected by Bolus (*Bolus* 10197). On the other hand *R. burchellii* (*R. polycantha*) is also recorded from Transkei and there is the possibility of *R. bolusii* being a natural hybrid of the two related species. It is suspected that natural hybridization has played a part in the variability found throughout this genus.

Thus in dealing with two unclassified collections from near Wakkerstroom, Transvaal, I was in a quandary as to the best method of taxonomic treatment to adopt. Having decided against describing the taxon as a new species, but to treat it as a subspecies of *R. flanaganii* Schltr., further nomenclatural changes have become necessary. This is because H. Huber included *Riocreuxia* in his revision of the genus *Ceropegia* in Mems Soc. broteriana 12 (1957) (1958) and created three varieties of his *Ceropegia flanaganii*. The changes required now are:

a. *Riocreuxia flanaganii* Schltr. subsp. *woodii* (N.E. Br.) *R. A. Dyer*, subsp. et comb. nov. Type: Natal, Wood 338 in NH 181 (NH!).

*Riocreuxia woodii* N.E. Br. in F.C. 4, 1: 803 (1908). Type as above.

*Ceropegia flanaganii* (Schltr.) Huber var. *fallax* Huber in Mems Soc. broteriana 12: 169 (1957) (1958). Type as above.

b. *Riocreuxia flanaganii* Schltr. subsp. *alexandrina* (Huber) *R. A. Dyer*, subsp. nov., comb. nov. Type: Natal, Dumisa, *Rudatis* 1540 (K!; NH!).

*Ceropegia flanaganii* (Schltr.) Huber var. *alexandrina* Huber l.c.

c. *Riocreuxia flanaganii* Schltr. subsp. *segregata* *R. A. Dyer*, subsp. nov., affinis *R. flanaganii* Schltr. subsp. *flanaganii* foliis crassiusculis, lobis corollae crassiusculis tubo brevior, corona majore differt.

TYPE.—Transvaal, 2730 (Vryheid): Kastrol Nek near Wakkerstroom, *FitzSimons and Van Dam* in TRV 25981 (PRE, holo.).

Perennial herb with somewhat woody rootstock producing slightly fleshy roots; stem twining, unifariously pubescent. *Leaves* apparently subsucculent, petiolate, with petiole up to about 30 mm long, shortly unifariously pubescent; blade deeply cordate-ovate, up to about 70 mm long, 50 mm broad, sometimes with the basal lobes overlapping, with short scattered pubescence and short cilia. *Flowers* fasciculate in shortly pedunculate cymes; peduncles 5–20 mm long, branched with 1 or 2 short extensions; pedicels 15–20 mm long, glabrous. *Sepals* linear-lanceolate, spreading-recurved, 4–5 mm long, glabrous. *Corolla* 16–18 mm long; tube subcylindric, slightly inflated,  $\pm 10$  mm long, glabrous; lobes linear-filiform from a lanceolate base, 6–8 mm long, connate at tips, glabrous. *Staminal-column*  $\pm 2$  mm long, rather stout; corona arising nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  way up staminal-column forming 5 pockets 0,5–0,75 mm deep with spreading bifid outer margins with lobules 0,25 mm long and confluent with inner corona-lobes at base; inner corona-lobes linear, 1,5–2 mm long, overtopping staminal column. *Pollinia* subglobose,  $\pm 0,15$  mm diam., with translucent apex, attached by short delicate caudicles to minute carrier. *Follicles* slender, subterete, 80–100 mm long, slightly constricted between seeds.

Known only from southern Transvaal near Wakkerstroom in Kastrol Nek.

TRANSVAAL.—2730 (Vryheid): near Wakkerstroom in Kastrol Nek (–AD), Jan. 1925, *FitzSimons & van Dam* in TRV 25981 in PRE; near Wakkerstroom, *Pole Evans* 19656.

The subspecies *woodii* and *alexandrina*, known only from single gatherings, together with subspecies *flanaganii* and *segregata*, make a conglomerate with differing corollas and outer coronas, but which are held together mainly by a similarity of the well-developed inner corona-lobes.

R. A. DYER