

IRIDACEAE

A NEW SPECIES OF *GLADIOLUS* FROM THE TRANSVAAL

***Gladiolus dolomiticus* Oberm., sp. nov., *G. microcarpo* Lewis affinis, perianthio zygomorphio infundibuliformo tubo brevior differt.**

Planta c. 1 m alta erecta. *Cormus* depresso-globosus fibrosus. *Folia* 4–6 longe vaginantia lineari-acuminata c. 500 mm longa 10–15 mm lata pubescentia nervis prominentibus sulfureis. *Spica* 5–10 flora, ad 300 mm longa secunda erecta; bracteae ovatae c. 20 mm longae apiculatae membranaceae. *Perianthium* late infundibuliforme 40–60 mm longum pallide roseum; tubus c. 20 mm longis sensim dilatatus; lobi ovati inferiore aliquantum minori. *Capsula* oblongo-ellipsoidea 20–40 mm longa; semina c. 7 mm longa late alata.

TYPE.—Transvaal, 2429 (Zebediela): Makapansgat between Research Station and top of mountain (AA), *Enslin sub PRE 56899* (PRE, holo.).

Plants up to 1 m tall, erect. *Leaves* 4–6, linear-acuminate, c. 300 mm long, 15–20 mm broad, sheathing the peduncle, laxly pubescent all over with spreading hairs, nerves yellow, prominent, glabrous. *Spike* secund, c. 10-flowered, often branched at the base; rhachis minutely and densely pubescent, elongating with age; bracts ovate, acuminate, 20–30 mm long, membranous, pale. *Flowers* c. 40–60 mm long, widely funnelshaped, zygomorphic, delicate, pale pink; upper lobes erect, broadly ovate, acute, the lower slightly smaller, somewhat recurved, with a faint yellow basal area and occasionally a short thin red line near the apex; tube c. 20 mm long, expanding gradually. *Capsule* oblong-globose, 20–40 mm long; seeds with a wide membranous wing, c. 7 mm long. FIG. 6.

This attractive species was first collected by Mr B. Maguire in March 1975 while working at the Research Station at Makapansgat in the Potgietersrus district. Clumps of this *Gladiolus* were found growing amongst the dolomitic rock outcrops on the mountain slope above the Research Station. Dr P. Enslin, a keen *Gladiolus* enthusiast, later visited the area and collected some corms which flowered in his garden in Pretoria in March 1978. This enabled us to prepare the accompanying photo. It is closely related to *G. microcarpus* Lewis from the Drakensberg in Natal, a species growing at high altitudes, nestling among rocky crevices and usually pendulous. This Transvaal species grows upright on dolomite slopes at a much lower altitude in the warm Bushveld complex. What is remarkable is the close resemblance between these two species vegetatively while growing so far apart and under such different conditions. There is, however,



FIG. 6.—*Gladiolus dolomiticus*. Leg. *Enslin sub. PRE 56899*, × 0,25.

a difference in the perianth. Whereas the Natal species has a more or less actinomorphic hypocrateriform perianth with a long narrow cylindrical tube, the Transvaal species exhibits the zygomorphic perianth so typical of *Gladiolus*, i.e. with the upper lobes larger, more or less erect to hooded and with the lower lobes smaller and somewhat recurved. The tube too, is shorter and funnellform. Possibly the Natal species may be regarded as more primitive.

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