

POLYPODIACEAE

PYRROSIA SCHIMPERANA, A NEW FERN RECORD FOR SOUTH AFRICA

The first mention of *Pyrrosia schimperana* (Mett.) Alston occurring in South Africa was by Van der Schijff in *Fauna & Flora* 14: 51 (1963). In this he cited *Van der Schijff* 5505 and *Schweickerdt* 2610 from Mariepskop. In 1971 this information was repeated by Van der Schijff & Schoonraad in *Bothalia* 10: 478, 482. These records seem to have escaped the attention of taxonomists. No specimens were sent to either PRE or BOL, and Schelpe, in *Fl. Zamb. Pterid.* 147 (1970), did not include South Africa in the distribution area of *P. schimperana*.

Recently a further collection of *P. schimperana* has been made, namely *Scheepers & Engelbrecht* 1999 from the Blyderivierspoort Nature Reserve, downstream of the Belvedere Creek confluence. It was collected in gallery forest, on litter on a boulder. These specimens matched material of *P. schimperana* from tropical Africa. The identification was confirmed by Prof. E. Schelpe, who also confirmed its novelty to the South African flora. In a personal communication, Prof. Schelpe told the author that he had observed the species in this locality in the winter of 1972. He wrote: "The largest, but inaccessible, specimens there are much larger than any material I have seen from Rhodesia."

P. schimperana can be recognized by the combination of only one kind of stellate hairs with short, flattened, white branches on the leaf surfaces, the non-ciliate rhizome scales, and the closely-spaced leaves.

According to Schelpe (1971, l.c.) *P. schimperana* is epiphytic and lithophytic in forest and tall woodland, 400–1 100 m above sea level.

P. schimperana is widely distributed throughout tropical Africa, to Ethiopia in the north, Nigeria in the west, and Mozambique in the east. Previous to the records reported on above, the southernmost limit of its distribution was in eastern Rhodesia. This shows a disjunct distribution, with the 500 km-wide Limpopo Valley separating the Transvaal and Rhodesian localities. A rather similar distribution is shown by *Leucospermum saxosum* S. Moore (Proteaceae), which occurs abundantly on the Chimanimani Mountains in Rhodesia, with small outlying colonies in the Pilgrims Rest district of the Transvaal.

TRANSVAAL.—2430 (Pilgrims Rest): Blyderivierkloof, Mariepskop (-DB), *Van der Schijff* 5505 (PRE, PRU); *Schweickerdt* 2610 (PRE, PRU); Blyderivierspoort Nature Reserve (-DB), *Scheepers & Engelbrecht* 1999 (PRE, BOL); Abel Erasmus Pass (-BC), *Van der Schijff* 5638 (PRE, PRU).

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