

TILIACEAE

A NEW SPECIES OF CORCHORUS

Corchorus sulcatus Verdoorn, sp. nov. *C. asplenifolio* Burch. affinis, sed foliis subtus dense sericeo-villosis, a *C. confuso* Wild pedicellis fructuosis valde recurvis differt.

Planta perennis, caulorhiza lignosa, ramulis prostratis sericeis vel sericeovillosis. *Folia* petiolata; lamina sulcata, ovata, subrotunda, vel anguste ovato-oblonga, 1–3·2 cm longa, 4–16 mm lata, supra sericea vel sparse villosa, glabriuscula, infra dense adpressa sericeo-villosa, margine crenato-dentata, nervis lateralibus supra valde impressi infra prominentibus; petioli 2–10 mm longi, sericei vel villosi. *Cymae* 1–3-florae, suboppositifoliae, subsessiles vel pedunculis 1·5 mm longis, villosis; pedicelli 1–4 mm longi, villosi; bracteae anguste lineares, acuminatae, sparse pilosae. *Alabastra* subglobosa, sericea vel villosa, minute mucronata. *Sepala* anguste lanceolato-elliptica, c. 6 mm longa, 1·75 mm lata, extus pilosa. *Petala* flava, obovata, sepalis subaequilonga, 6 mm longa, 2 mm lata (interdum petala suborbicularia, sepalis breviores, 1·75 mm lata), basi breviter unguiculata ungue parce ciliato. *Androgynophorum* c. 0·75 mm altum; stamina numerosa, filamentis 4 mm longis, antheris 0·75 mm longis. *Ovarium*

3-loculare, anguste oblongo-ellipticum, strigosum; stylus c. 4 mm longus, glabriusculus. *Capsula* cylindrica subarcuata, strigosa vel villosa 15–25 mm longa, 2–2.5 mm diam., trivalvis, pedunculo 2 mm longo, pedicellis valde recurvatis c. 4 mm longis. FIG. 8.

Type: Transvaal, Potgietersrus District, 10 miles south of Roedtan, *Codd & Verdoorn* 10376 (PRE, holo.).

Perennial with a woody rootstock, branches short, usually under 30 cm long, prostrate, sericeous or sericeo-villous. *Leaves* petioled; lamina sulcate between the lateral impressed nerves, ovate, subrotund or narrowly ovate-oblong, 1–3.2 cm long, 4–16 mm wide, upper surface sericeous or sparsely villous becoming almost glabrous, lower surface densely and persistently appressedly sericeo-villous, margins crenate-dentate, lateral nerves deeply impressed on the upper surface, prominent beneath; petiole 2–10 mm long, sericeous or villous. *Cymes* 1–3-flowered, sub-opposite the leaves, subsessile or with a peduncle up to 1.5 mm long, villous; pedicels 1–4 mm long, villous; bracts narrowly linear, acuminate, sparsely pilose. *Buds* subglobose, sericeous or villous, minutely mucronate. *Sepals* narrowly lanceolate-elliptic, c. 6 mm long, 1.75 mm broad, pilose without. *Petals* yellow, obovate about as long as the sepals, 6 mm long, 2 mm broad (on some flowers petals suborbicular and shorter than the sepals, 1.75 mm broad), shortly clawed, claw very sparsely and minutely ciliate. *Androgynophore* about 0.75 mm long; stamens numerous with filaments about 4 mm long, anthers 0.75 mm long. *Ovary* 3-locular, narrowly oblong-elliptic densely strigose; style about 4 mm long, more or less glabrous. *Capsule* cylindric, somewhat curved, strigose or villous, 15–25 mm long, 2–2.5 mm diam., 3-valved; fruiting peduncle 2 mm long, pedicels strongly recurved, c. 4 mm long, persistent.

In the Transvaal this species was found growing scattered on an extensive limestone outcrop about ten miles south of Roedtan on the Marble Hall road. It occurred quite frequently in this patch and the roots were found to be curling over and under the rounded stones common in this formation. Growing with it in the same area was *Melhanianthus griquensis* which is found commonly on limestone outcrops in Griqualand West. It is, therefore, not surprising that a specimen from the Barkly West area collected on limestone, was found to agree with the Roedtan specimens.

CAPE.—Barkly West: Gong Gong, *Acocks* 1445.

TRANSSVAAL.—Potgietersrus: 10 miles south of Roedtan, *Codd & Verdoorn* 10376; *Verdoorn* 2511.

In nature the dark green leaves spread out from the prostrate branchlets with face upwards showing the characteristic sulcate surface caused by the deeply impressed lateral veins. On pressed specimens the corrugations disappear to a certain extent, but there are usually some leaves on each specimen showing this feature. The under surface of the leaf is densely and persistently covered with long, silky appressed hairs. On the Cape specimen this pubescence tends to be sericeous, that is silky and appressed, whereas in the Transvaal specimens it is sericeo-villous, the hairs being slightly curly or wavy and not so obviously silky.

C. sulcatus approaches the variable species *C. asplenifolia* in the procumbent habit and the similarly shaped capsules borne on strongly recurved pedicels. It is distinguished from it mainly by the pubescence on the under surface of the leaves, their shape and the usually shorter more permanently prostrate branches. In *C. asplenifolia* the leaves are narrowly oblong-lanceolate to almost linear and glabrous to hispid with bulbous-based hairs, whereas in *C. sulcatus* they are ovate to narrowly ovate-oblong and, as stated above, densely, persistently sericeo-villous beneath.