

FABACEAE

PEARSONIA MBABANENSIS, AN OVERLOOKED SYNONYM OF *P. SESSILIFOLIA* SUBSP. *MARGINATA* (TRIBE CROTALARIEAE)

During the databasing of the Fabaceae collection at the Compton Herbarium, the type of *Pearsonia mbabanensis* Compton [holotype: *Dlamini s.n.* (NBG)] was brought to my attention. This species was described by Compton (1967) during his botanical survey of Swaziland. Polhill (1974) was clearly unaware of the description of *Pearsonia mbabanensis* in his revision of the genus *Pearsonia* Dümmer, but cited a Compton specimen of this species (Compton 25203) under *P. sessilifolia* (Harv.) Dümmer subsp. *marginata* (Schinz) Polhill. Recent checklists of the southern African flora also make no mention of *P. mbabanensis* (Arnold & De Wet 1993; Retief & Herman 1997; Nkonki 2003; Germishuizen 2006; Klopper *et al.* 2006). *P. sessilifolia* is an extremely variable species which currently includes four subspecies (Polhill 1974). Seven out of the nine species that Compton (1976) listed in his treatment of *Pearsonia* for the *Flora of Swaziland* have since been reduced to the synonymy of the subspecies of *P. sessilifolia* (Polhill 1974). *P. mbabanensis* represents another such case as it clearly falls within the current circumscription of *P.*

sessilifolia subsp. *marginata*. The synonymy is formalized below:

***Pearsonia sessilifolia* (Harv.) Dümmer subsp. *marginata* (Schinz) Polhill** in Kew Bulletin 29: 402 (1974). *Lotononis marginata* Schinz: 31 (1899). Type: South Africa, [Mpumalanga], near Barberton, *Galpin 960* (Z, holo.–photo.!, BOL!, PRE!, K, NH–photo.!).

P. mbabanensis Compton: 296 (1967); Compton: 251 (1976), syn. nov. Type: Swaziland, Mbabane Dist., near Poliniane River, *Dlamini s.n.* (NBG, holo.!).

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