

NEW EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF A DISJUNCT DISTRIBUTION OF *ALOE KARASBERGENSIS*

*Aloe karasbergensis* Pillans was described by Pillans in 1928. It is a member of *Aloe* Section *Paniculatae* Salm-Dyck ex Kunth, which consists of six species namely *A. buhrii* Lavranos, *A. karasbergensis*, *A. komaggasensis* Kritzinger & Van Jaarsv., *A. kouebokkaveldensis* Van Jaarsv. & A.B.Low, *A. reynoldsii* Letty and *A. striata* Haw. *A. karasbergensis* and *A. komaggasensis* were reduced to subspecific status under *A. striata* by Glen & Hardy (1987, 2000). Lavranos (2004) argued that these two taxa should be recognized as separate species, since all six taxa in *A. Section Paniculatae* are easily distinguishable on the basis of vegetative and floral characters.

*Aloe karasbergensis* grows in semi-desert sand and stony mountain slopes in Namibia and the Northern Cape Province (Figure 14), especially in areas with very low and erratic rainfall (Glen & Hardy 2000). The distribution details provided by Reynolds (1950) indicate that this species occurs in southern Namibia from the Kubub Mountains south to the Richtersveld and Springbok area in South Africa, and then again near Kenhardt and south of Prieska. The distribution map provided by Glen &

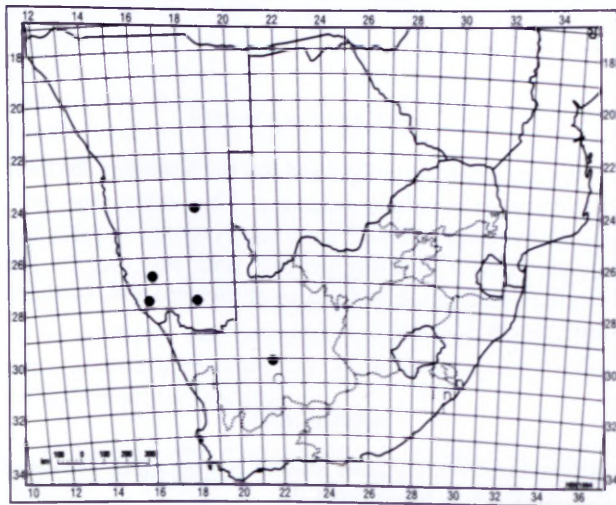


FIGURE 14.—Distribution of *Aloe karasbergensis*, based on specimens at PRE, ●; confirmed record in central Northern Cape, ○.

Hardy (2000) clearly echoes this disjunct distribution. *A. karasbergensis* has also recently been found further West, on the Aurus Mountains, inside Diamond Area No. 1 in Namibia (E. van Jaarsveld pers. comm.)

Even though the only specimen in the National Herbarium, Pretoria (PRE) of *Aloe karasbergensis* from the central Northern Cape was collected by the revered J.P.H. Acocks, author of *Veld types of South Africa*, there has been some doubt on the validity of the disjunct distribution range of *A. karasbergensis*, as reflected in Reynolds (1950) and Glen & Hardy (2000).

A recent collection by the second author confirms that the species indeed occurs in the central Northern Cape Province.

NORTHERN CAPE.—3021 (Vanwyksvlei): Carnarvon area, Farm Konkakloof, (–DD), P.J. du Preez 3670 (BLFU).

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