

FABACEAE

THE CORRECT NAME FOR *ACACIA MONTANA*

The author published a new species, *Acacia montana* within the *Acacia karroo* complex in Coates Palgrave (2002). Bentham (1842) used this specific epithet for an *Acacia* species in Australia that was transferred to *Racosperma* Martius by Pedley (1987). The Australian species is now known as *R. montana* which is the base name for *A. montana*. Therefore *A. montana* is a homonym and the correct name is:

Acacia theronii P.P.Swartz, nom. nov.

A. montana P.P.Swartz in M. Coates Palgrave, Keith Coates Palgrave Trees of southern Africa, edn 3: 19, 289 (2002) non *A. montana* Benth: 360 (1842).

TYPE.—KwaZulu-Natal, 2831 (Nkandla): Hlabisa Dist., Feb. 1976, (-BB), Swartz 178 (PRE, holo.; PRU).

Acacia theronii is named after Prof. G.K. Theron, previously from the Botany Department of the University of Pretoria, who did many years of research on the vegetation of the Loskopdam Nature Reserve, where this



FIGURE 5.—*Acacia theronii* P.P.Swartz, Codd 2009, Acocks 13077, ± 18 km SE of Hlabisa, KwaZulu-Natal.

species is found. The author investigated the *Acacia karroo* complex in detail for many years and realised that this new taxon is well defined (Swartz 1982). It is a tall, slender tree, branching high above the ground, with a relatively pale trunk (Figure 5). It is well adapted to grow in dry and very hot areas and is always associated with shale rock formations. It has the ability to revive well after fire. The wood is dense, hard, compact and relatively heavy. Chemical analysis of the wood confirms that it is a separate taxon from *A. karroo* and *A. natalitia* (Malan & Swartz 1995). The leaves of *A. theronii* have a robust, mat appearance, as the leaflets (pinnules) are relatively large and densely packed with a thick wax layer as seen

under the electron-microscope (Swartz 1982). Anatomy of young stems show that the periderm actively divides at an early stage, and new cells are constantly being formed, pushing the older ones off, and resulting in a relatively thick and powdery bark (Swartz 1982). Chemical analysis of the fragrances of the flowers, the seed and leaves done by Brain (1986, 1987), also show evidence that this is a well-defined new species.

Acacia theronii was found growing on the hills of Hlabisa in northern KwaZulu-Natal, southeast of Vryheid, as well as on the hills around Groblersdal in Mpumalanga in the Loskopdam Nature Reserve. It occurs in a transitional area in Umfolozi, Hluhluwe and the Lebombo Mountains and on the bushy hills around Pongola, Magudu, Mkuze and Nongoma (Ross 1975).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The advice of Profs P.J. Robbertse, P.D.F. Kok and A.E. van Wyk, Ms Meg Coates Palgrave and Ms Marie Jordaan is greatly appreciated.

REFERENCES

- BENTHAM, G. 1842. Notes on Mimoseae, with a synopsis of species. *Hooker's London Journal of Botany* 1: 360.
- BRAIN, P. 1986. Leaf peroxidase types in *Acacia karroo*. Geographical distribution and influence of the environment. *South African Journal of Botany* 52: 48–52.
- BRAIN, P. 1987. Immunology and phylogeny: a preliminary study of *Acacia*. *South African Journal of Science* 83: 422–427.
- MALAN, E. & SWARTZ, P. 1995. A comparative study of the phenolic products in the heartwood of *Acacia karroo* from two different localities. *Phytochemistry* 39: 791–794.
- PEDLEY, L. 1987. *Racosperma* Martius (Leguminosae: Mimosoideae) in Queensland: a checklist. *Austrobaileya* 2: 344–357.
- ROSS, J.H. 1975. Fabaceae, Mimosoideae. *Flora of southern Africa*, vol. 16, part 1. Department of Agricultural Technical Services, Pretoria.
- SWARTZ, P. 1982. 'n Numeries-taksonomiese evaluering van die takson *Acacia karroo* Hayne in suidelike Afrika. M.Sc. thesis, University of Pretoria.
- SWARTZ, P.P. 2002. *Acacia montana*. In M. Coates Palgrave, *Keith Coates Palgrave Trees of southern Africa*, edn 3. Struik, Cape Town.

P.P. SWARTZ*

* Formerly National Botanical Institute, Pretoria. Present address: 362 Brook Street, 0181 Menlo Park, Pretoria.

MS. received: 2003-07-01.