

PORTULACACEAE

THE SYNONYMY OF *CERARIA NAMAQUENSIS* (SOND.) H.PEARSON & E.L.STEPHENS

In his description of *Ceraria namaquensis* (Sond.) H.Pearson & E.L.Stephens, Dyer (1984) suggests that *C. gariepina* H.Pearson & E.L.Stephens should probably be regarded as a synonym of the former name. Pearson & Stephens (1912) had separated the two taxa as follows:

'Living stems not readily inflammable. Surface of stem dull grey. Leaves 3–4.5 mm long *C. namaquensis*
Living stems readily inflammable. Surface of stem pale yellow.
Leaves less than 2 mm long *C. gariepina*'

However, Dyer (1984) reports that cultivated material at the Pretoria National Botanical Garden that was other-

wise identified as *C. gariepina*, only burned when dry. Leaves of specimens in PRE show a continuous range from 2.0 to 4.5 mm long, often on the same specimen. Many plants, indeed nearly all the specimens in PRE, have both grey and yellowish branches. In fact, the PRE duplicate of *Pearson s.n. in Percy Sladen Memorial Expedition 3789* (an isosytype of *C. gariepina*) has dark coppery brown stems, a colour matched by the long-leaved specimens *Pole Evans 2250* (PRE) and *Tölken 5308* (PRE).

It may be concluded that the distinguishing characters given by Pearson & Stephens (1912) are not constant in practice. Examination of the specimens in PRE has failed to yield any other characters which can be used to distinguish between these two taxa, and they have been regarded informally as one for many years.

With the production of a major new work on the southern African flora at PRE, it has become necessary to regularise the position of informal decisions such as this, and the purpose of this note is to place on record the reasons for the following synonymy.

***C. namaquensis* (Sond.) H. Pearson & E.L. Stephens** in *Annals of the South African Museum* 9: 33 (1912); Podlech: 8 (1967); Dyer (1984).

Portulacaria namaquensis Sond. 2: 386 (1862).

C. gariepina H. Pearson & E.L. Stephens 9: 33 (1912), *synon. nov.*

The names are typified by two syntypes each. As it has not yet been possible to examine all four gatherings with type status, no lectotypes are chosen at this stage.

REFERENCES

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