

## Notes on African plants

VARIOUS AUTHORS

### AMARYLLIDACEAE

#### SHOULD *CRINUM FORBESII* (LINDL.) SCHULT. & SCHULT.F. BE REINSTATED?

Lehmiller (1992) reinstated the name *Crinum forbesii* (Lindl.) Schult. & Schult.f. and criticised Verdoorn's (1962) decision to reject it. However, Lehmiller's long reasoning misses the real issue.

Verdoorn (1962, 1968) described two new species of *Crinum*, *C. delagoense* I.Verd. and *C. paludosum* I.Verd. from Natal and Mozambique, being unable to determine the identity of *Crinum forbesianum* Herb. This name, used by Herbert (1837) and Baker (1881, 1896), was based on *Amaryllis forbesii* Lindl. Lindley (1826) described the species from bulbs collected by John Forbes in Delagoa Bay which flowered at Chiswick near London. No type specimen or drawing exists. Herbert (1837) noted that all Forbes's bulbs had rotted. Although Herbert referred to an unpublished illustration, this too is presumably lost.

Verdoorn clearly pondered for many years on the identity of *Crinum forbesii*. She (1962, 1966) discussed in detail why the newly described *C. delagoense* does not fit Lindley's description of *Crinum forbesii*. In addition she (1966) indicated that Forbes's bulbs could have represented more than one species of *Crinum*. Verdoorn (1966, 1968) described the discovery of a new plant by Mr Gordon McNeil that fitted Lindley's description better than *C. delagoense*. Eventually Verdoorn (1968) described this plant as *C. paludosum*. Her (1968, 1973) reasoning is clear. *Crinum forbesii* should be regarded as a *nomen incertum* since it is impossible to prove beyond reasonable doubt that McNeil's discovery represents the same species of *Crinum* as discovered by Forbes.

Lehmiller (1992) appears to have misunderstood Verdoorn and concentrated on the fact that Verdoorn (1973: 45) considered *Crinum forbesii* (Lindl.) Schult. & Schult.f. as illegitimate. In fact Verdoorn correctly considered *C. forbesianum* Herb. as an illegitimate name and continued to reject *C. forbesii* as a *nomen confusum*. The synonyms mentioned under *C. delagoense* by Verdoorn (1973), *Amaryllis forbesii* var. *purpurea* Lindl. and *Crinum forbesianum* var. *punicea* should also be regarded as *nomina incerta*. At least three species of *Crinum* occur in Mozambique that could well fit Lindley's and Herbert's descriptions. These are the very variable *C. macowanii* Baker, *C. delagoense* and *C. paludosum*. Lehmiller himself (1992) argues that discrepancies in the above-mentioned descriptions could be attributed to the fact that Forbes's bulbs were cultivated under less than optimal conditions in England. Incidentally Lehmiller refers to the author of the new combination, *C. forbesii* as 'Schultz', but it is Schult. & Schult.f. in *Systema vegetabilium* 7: 864 (Stafleu & Cowan 1985; Smith 1990).

The present Code of Botanical Nomenclature (Greuter *et al.* 1994) provides new facilities to avoid unnecessary name changes in order to promote a stabilized nomenclature. Lehmiller's (1992) argument for reinstating the confused name *C. forbesii*, 30 years after Verdoorn dealt satisfactorily with it, is misplaced and in strong contrast with the aims of the Code.

It remains likely that *C. delagoense* is conspecific with *C. stuhlmannii* Baker from East Africa, perhaps only distinguishable at subspecific level (Nordal 1977). The latter name will have priority if detailed studies confirm this possibility.

#### REFERENCES

- BAKER, J.G. 1881. *Crinum forbesianum*. *Curtis' Botanical Magazine* 37: t. 6545.
- BAKER, J.G. 1896. *Amaryllidaceae. Flora capensis* 6: 171–246. Reeve, London.
- GREUTER, W., BARRIE, FR., BURDET, H.M., CHALONER, W.G., DEMOULIN, V., HANKSWORTH, D.L., JØRGENSEN, P.M., NICOLSON, D.H., SILVA, P.C., TREHANE, P. & MCNEILL, J. 1994. *International code of botanical nomenclature (Tokyo Code)*. Koeltz Scientific Books, Königstein.
- HERBERT, W. 1837. *Amaryllidaceae*. Ridgway, London.
- LEHMILLER, D.J. 1992. Restoration of *Crinum forbesii* (Lindl.) Schult. emend. Herbert. *Herbertia* 48: 86–90.
- LINDLEY, J. 1826. Report upon the new or rare plants which have flowered in the garden of the Horticultural Society at Chiswick, from its first formation to March 1824. *Transactions of the Horticultural Society of London* 6: 62–99.
- NORDAL, I. 1977. Revision of the East African taxa of the genus *Crinum* (Amaryllidaceae). *Norwegian Journal of Botany* 24: 179–194.
- SMITH, G.F. 1990. The correct author citations of *Aloe bowiea* and *A. myriacantha* (Aloioideae). *Bothalia* 20: 80–82.
- STAFLEU, F.A. & COWAN, R.S. 1985. *Taxonomic literature*. Vol. 5. Bohn, Scheltema & Holkema, Utrecht.
- VERDOORN, I. 1962. *Crinum delagoense*. *The Flowering Plants of Africa* 35: t. 1389.
- VERDOORN, I. 1966. Identity of John Forbes's *Crinum*. *African Wild Life* 20: 197–203.
- VERDOORN, I. 1968. *Crinum paludosum*. *The Flowering Plants of Africa* 39: t. 1523.
- VERDOORN, I. 1973. The genus *Crinum* in southern Africa. *Bothalia* 11: 27–52.

R.H. ARCHER\* and C. ARCHER\*

\*National Botanical Institute, Private Bag X101, Pretoria 0001.  
MS. received: 1995-12-12.