

LAMIACEAE

RESUSCITATION OF *SYNCOLOSTEMON RAMULOSUS* E. MEY. EX BENTH.

Three closely related species of *Syncolostemon*, *S. densiflorus* Benth., *S. ramulosus* E. Mey. ex Benth. and *S. rotundifolius* E. Mey. ex Benth., were described by Benthham (1838), all based on Drège specimens collected in the Transkei during Dr Andrew Smith's expedition to Natal in 1832.

In my treatments of the genus (Codd 1976, 1985), *S. densiflorus* and *S. rotundifolius* were recognized as distinct species, well documented by modern material, but *S. ramulosus* remained something of a mystery. In the shape of the calyx teeth (probably the most reliable character for separating the three species, as indicated below), *S. ramulosus* is somewhat intermediate between the other two and, being nearer to *S. densiflorus* in this respect, was placed under the latter species as a synonym.

In recent years, as a result of thorough collecting in the area adjoining the Umtamvuna River by Mr A. T. D.

Abbott, who farms near Port Edward, and Prof. A. E. van Wyk of Pretoria University, it has become apparent that this view is incorrect. My awareness of this was alerted by two specimens collected in April 1986 by Mr Abbott on the farm Clearwater near Port Edward, Nos 3101 and 3102, which he maintained were distinct species, though both would run to *S. rotundifolius* in my key. On closer examination, No. 3101 was found to agree with the type material of *S. rotundifolius* whereas No. 3102 matched the type material of *S. ramulosus*. Certain other small differences were noted and it was realised that the following specimens, previously included in *S. rotundifolius*, were in fact *S. ramulosus*, which should be regarded as a distinct species: *Acocks 13331*; *Nicholson 1419* (from near Port Edward, Natal); and *Strey 8638* from Umtentu, Transkei). The following are the main distinguishing characters.

S. rotundifolius. Shrub 0.8–1.8 m tall. Leaf blade obovate to subrotund, 6–15 × 4–12 mm. Inflorescence

medium-dense to lax; verticils 2-flowered. Calyx puberulous to shortly glandular-pubescent; teeth deltoid, subequal, 1,5–2 mm long. Corolla bright mauve or magenta-pink to pink, 20–27 mm long, 15 mm wide at the mouth; lower lip 8–10 mm long. Stamens exserted by 10–15 mm.

S. ramulosus. Shrub 0,6–1,2 m tall. Leaf blade obovate to rotund, 5–7 × 3,5–6 mm. Inflorescence medium-dense; verticils (2–) 4–6-flowered. Calyx glandular-hispidulous; teeth lanceolate-subulate 2–2,5 mm long, the uppermost tooth usually slightly shorter and broader than the lower 4. Corolla lilac to pale pinkish mauve or occasionally white, 16–20 mm long, 5 mm wide at the mouth; lower lip 3 mm long. Stamens exserted by 5–6 mm.

S. densiflorus. Shrub 1–2,2 m tall. Leaf blade broadly elliptic to broadly ovate or rotund, 5–15 ×

4–10 mm. Inflorescence dense; verticils 4–6-flowered, Calyx glandular-hispidulous; teeth lanceolate-subulate, 2,5–3 mm long, the uppermost tooth usually shorter than the lower 4. Corolla crimson to pink or rarely whitish, 18–23 mm long, 8–12 mm wide at the mouth; lower lip 5 mm long. Stamens exserted by 8–10 mm.

REFERENCES

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