

LILIACEAE

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN SPECIES OF *ASPARAGUS*1. *The correct name for A. thunbergianus* J. A. Schult. & J. H. Schult.

In the course of an examination of material in the Bergius Herbarium in Stockholm, I was shown a specimen labelled in Bergius' hand "Asparagus mihi rubicundus". This is undoubtedly the type (Fig. 9) of *A. rubicundus* Bergius, which was described in his *Descriptiones plantarum ex Capite Bonae Spei* (1767). The specimen was collected at the Cape and communicated to Bergius by Grubb. It cannot be established whether or not Grubb collected it himself. The epithet has hitherto not been taken up as the description was considered inadequate and the type had not been seen.

Baker (*Flora Capensis* 6: 266; 1896) incorrectly treated *A. rubicundus* as a synonym for *A. africanus* Lam. var. *dependens* (Thunb.) Bak. I have retained *A. dependens* Thunb. as a synonym for *A. africanus*, but do not consider that *A. rubicundus* should be placed here. There is no reason to believe that Baker saw the material of *A. rubicundus*.

The specimen in Bergius' Herbarium is a flowering branch of the species currently known as *A. thunbergianus* J. A. Schult. & J. H. Schult. The correct name and important synonymy therefore become:—

***Asparagus rubicundus* Bergius**, *Pl. Cap. Bon. Sp.* 88 (1767). Type: Caput Bonae Spei, comm. Grubb (SBT, holo.!).

A. thunbergianus J. A. Schult. & J. H. Schult., *Syst. Veg.* 7: 333 (1829); Jessop, in *Bothalia* 9: 55 (1966).

Asparagopsis dregei Kunth, *Enum. Pl.* 5: 84 (1850). *A. thunbergii* Kunth, *Enum. Pl.* 5: 85 (1850), nom. illegit.

2. *Asparagus macowanii* Bak.

I formerly recognized two varieties in *A. macowanii* Bak. (*Bothalia* 9: 57; 1966). On the evidence of herbarium material I believed that the eastern Cape plants never exceeded 1 m in height, while Natal and Transvaal material exceeded 1,5 m. An examination

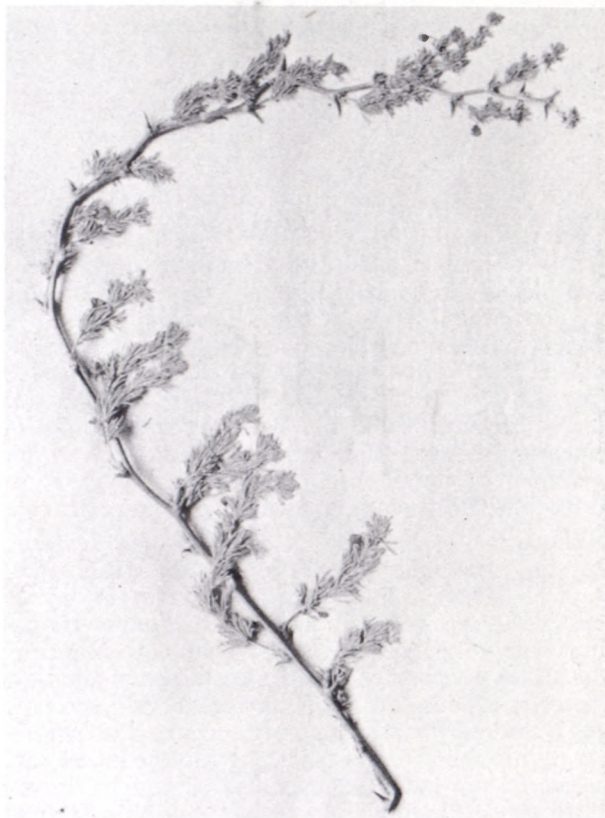


FIG. 9.—*Asparagus rubicundus*. Holotype in Bergius Herbarium, Stockholm.

of many populations in the eastern Cape has shown that the herbarium record was very incomplete and that in this area plants may occasionally be up to as much as 2 m high.

It is, therefore, not possible to recognize *A. macowanii* var. *zuluensis* (N.E. Br.) Jess. as a distinct taxon.

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