

*Aloe pictifolia* Hardy, sp. nov.

Suffrutex ad 30 cm altus, 18 cm diam. *Caules* arcuato-ascendentes, ramosi; rami in rosulam foliorum terminantes; foliorum bases persistentes. *Folia* conferta, basi amplexicaulia, 12–15 cm longa, 1–2,5 cm lata, sensim attenuata apice acuto vel acuminato, glauca; supra aliquantum plana, versus apicem canaliculata, copiose et regulatim albo-maculata; subtus convexa carina prope apicem dentata, albo-maculata; margo dentibus pungentibus 1 mm longis 4–5 mm remotis armatus. *Inflorescentiae* 2–4 simultaneae, simplices, arcuato-ascendentes; pedunculi 20 cm longi, basi plano-convexi vel complanati, 5–7 mm lati, 4–5-bracteati. *Racemi* cylindrato-acuminati, multo-flori, sublati, 14–17 cm longi 3,5–4 cm diam.; alabastra patentia; flori nutantes; bracteae late ovatae, abrupte acutae, 10 mm longae, basi 3–4 mm latae; pedicelli 11–12 mm longi. *Perianthium* scarlatinum, ad ostium viride cylindrato-trigonum, 15–16 mm longum, prope basin 3–4 mm diam.; basis rotundata; segmenta ad basin libera. *Antherae* aurantiacae, 1–2 mm exsertae.

TYPE: Cape, Humansdorp District, Patensie area, *Marais* sub PRE 32328 (PRE, holotype).

Plants of shrubby growth up to 30 cm tall. *Stems* arcuate-ascending, branched from the base, short or up to 12 cm long, rosettes dividing and subdividing up to 18 cm across; old leaf bases persistent. *Leaves* crowded, basally sheathing-amplexicaul, 12–15 cm long, suberectly spreading, 1–2,5 cm broad at the base,

gradually narrowing to an acuminate apex; upper surface flat to channelled especially towards the apex, glaucous, copiously and regularly white-spotted; lower surface convex with a toothed keel near the apex, spotted; margins armed with red-brown, pungent teeth up to 1 mm long, 4–5 mm apart, the interspaces the same colour as the leaf. *Inflorescences* 2–4 borne simultaneously, simple, arcuate-ascending; peduncles 20 cm long, base plano-convex to flattened, 5–7 mm broad with 4–5 sterile, many-nerved, ovate to broadly-ovate bracts, 7–8 mm broad and tapering to an abrupt, acute point. *Racemes* cylindrical-acuminate, sublatly many flowered; 14–17 cm long and 3,5–4 cm diam., the buds spreading obliquely to horizontally, open flowers nutant; floral bracts broadly ovate, abruptly tapering to an acute point, 10 mm long, 3–4 mm broad at the base; pedicels 11–12 mm long, red-brown. *Perianth* scarlet red (R.C.S. 1), greenish at mouth, cylindrical-trigonal, 15–16 mm long, 3–4 mm diam. near the base, base rounded; outer segments free to the base, 3-nerved, the nerves obscure for the greater part of their length, turning greenish at the apex, apices straight, subacute, scarcely spreading; inner segments free, whitish-yellow with thin edges, keel colour of the perianth for four fifths of its length turning green near the apex, apices more obtuse and slightly greenish on the inside. *Stamens*: filaments white, flattened; anthers orange, exserted by 1–2 mm. *Style* filiform, stigma eventually exserted by 1–2 mm long, 1 mm diam., pale green. *Capsule* not seen. FIGS. 13 and 14.



FIG. 13.—*Aloe pictifolia*, habit.



FIG. 14.—*Aloe pictifolia*. One of rosettes with inflorescences.

This new species was first collected in 1971 by Mr G. X. Marais, formerly of Pretoria and now of Newcastle in Natal, in the Humansdorp District of the southern Cape. The precise locality has not been revealed, because it is feared that *Aloe* enthusiasts might deplete the natural populations in the veld. This plant has obviously escaped detection until now, because of its situation in stony, rugged country.

The species appears to belong to the series *Echinatae* (*Humiles*), the imple inflorescence and cylindrical-trigonous perianth being not unlike those of *A. krapohlina* Marl. In general habit and leaf texture it is, however, very different: the plant is branched from the base with narrow, copiously and regularly spotted leaves. The plant has been called *A. pictifolia*, because of its "painted leaves".

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