

FABACEAE

A NEW SPECIES OF *PEARSONIA* FROM MPUMALANGA, SOUTH AFRICA

When the artist Anita Fabian was illustrating *Wild flowers of northern South Africa* (Fabian & Germishuizen 1997), she collected and illustrated a specimen of *Pearsonia* Dümmer from the Farm Paardekraal, near Dullstroom during 1991. The specimen was examined at the National Herbarium and was found to represent an undescribed species. For convenience, the caption of the illustration was left as *Pearsonia* sp. in Fabian & Germishuizen (1997). Subsequently more specimens of this taxon were found housed in the collections of PRE.

***Pearsonia hirsuta* Germish., sp. nov. *P. aristatae* (Schinz) Dümmer similis sed habitu minore, foliis sessilibus ad subsessilibus, linearibus, dense pubescentibus, calycibus dense pubescentibus, area mediana alorum vexillique pilis densis tecta, differt.**

TYPE.—Mpumalanga, 2530 (Lydenburg): Dullstroom, Verlorenvallei Farm 95 JT, (–AC), 29-11-1980, *Drews 215* (PRE, holo.). Figure 16.

Small erect herb up to 150 mm tall, often resprouting from a perennial woody rootstock after burning in early spring; stems densely clothed with long, white to golden brown (especially on younger parts), appressed to spread-

ing hairs. *Leaves* exstipulate, sessile to subsessile; leaflets 3, linear to narrowly lanceolate, narrowed to an acute tip, densely white to golden brown, hairy on both surfaces, margin inrolled; mid-leaflet (6–)7–12(–16) mm long, up to 1 mm wide; lateral leaflets 5–8(–12) mm long, up to 1 mm wide (Figure 17A). *Racemes* lax, unbranched, few-flowered, terminal or mostly axillary on lower stems; pedicels up to 3 mm long; bracts ovate, 5–9 × up to 3 mm, persistent; bracteoles linear to narrowly lanceolate, 5–9 × up to 1 mm. *Flowers* yellow. *Calyx* 15–20(–22) mm long, densely covered with white appressed or spreading hairs; lateral lobes paired, narrowly triangular, up to 4 mm long; carinal lobe linear, up to 10 mm long; lateral sinus two to four times as deep as upper sinuses (Figure 17B). *Standard* elliptic to broadly ovate, 18–22 × 10–14 mm, lateral margins strongly reflexed, dorsal surface densely hairy in a broad median band from middle of lamina to apex outside, margin crinkled or crisped at apex (Figure 17C). *Wing petals* narrowly obovate, 15–20 × 3–5 mm; sculpturing present, upper middle comprising transcostal lamellae and densely bearded with white to golden brown appressed hairs. *Keel petals* small, narrow, 14–16 × 2 mm; shallow basal pockets present on outside, up to 0.5 mm deep. *Stamens* monadelphous; sheath 12–15 mm long, split adaxially to base; anthers 1.5 mm long, alternately basi-



FIGURE 16.—Holotype of *Pearsonia hirsuta* Germish.

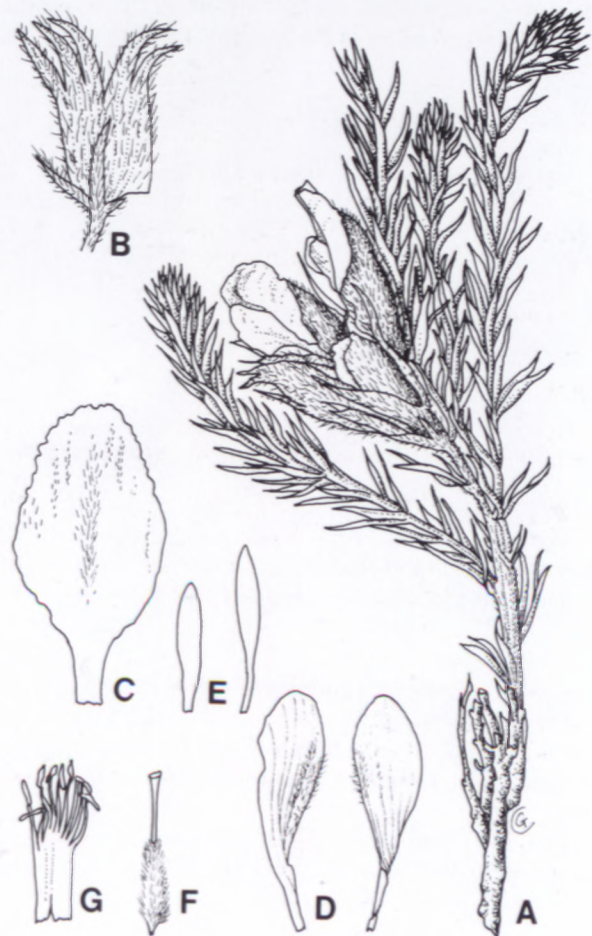


FIGURE 17.—*Pearsonia hirsuta*, *Drews 215*, holotype. A, flowering plant, × 1; B, calyx, × 1.5; C, standard, × 1.5; D, wing petals, × 1.5; E, keel petals, × 1.5; F, style, × 1.5; G, stamens, × 1.5. Drawing by G. Condy.

TABLE 2.—Differences between *Pearsonia hirsuta* and *P. aristata*

	<i>P. hirsuta</i>	<i>P. aristata</i>
habit	erect up to 150 mm	erect, spreading or prostrate up to 1.5 m
leaves	sessile or subsessile	distinctly stalked
leaflets	linear to narrowly lanceolate	ovate to elliptic

fixed and dorsifixed (Figure 17G). Ovary densely white-pilose, many-ovuled; style straight, glabrous; stigma capitate (Figure 17F). Fruit and seeds unknown.

Superficially *Pearsonia hirsuta* and *P. sessilifolia* (Harv.) Dümmer subsp. *filifolia* (Bolus) Polhill resemble one another. Polhill (1974), in his revision of the genus *Pearsonia*, describes the latter taxon as being a suffrutex with generally long, elongate, many-flowered racemes and the standard 8–13(–15) × 3.3–8.0 mm. *P. hirsuta* however, comprises short, few-flowered racemes and the standard is 18–22 × 10–14 mm. Differences between *P. hirsuta* and *P. aristata* are listed in Table 2.

Pearsonia hirsuta and *P. aristata* are allopatric. *P. hirsuta* occurs in the Lydenburg District of Mpumalanga (Figure 18), growing in low grassland between rocks in humus-rich sandy soil, whereas *P. aristata* occurs throughout the Northern Province, Mpumalanga, Swaziland, northern KwaZulu-Natal and into Zimbabwe. Flowering takes place during November. The specific epithet 'hirsuta' refers to the hairy nature of this species.

Specimens examined

MPUMALANGA.—2530 (Lydenburg): lower foothills of Steenkampsberg, ± 34.5 km from Lydenburg on road to Roosenekal. (–AB), *Burgoyne 2046* (PRE); Dullstroom, Verlorenvallei Farm 95 JT. (–AC), *Drews 215* (PRE); Long Tom Pass, near cannon, (–BA),

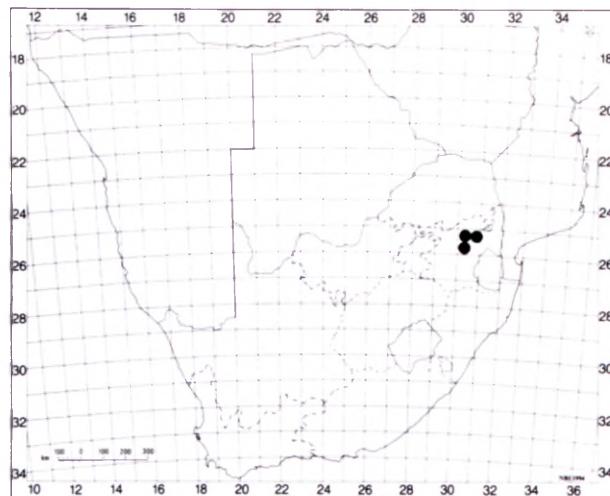


FIGURE 18.—Distribution of *Pearsonia hirsuta* Germish. in South Africa.

Burgoyne 2011 (PRE); Dullstroom District, crown of Farm Paardekraal, 'Oribi Falls', (–CA), *Fabian 1396* (PRE).

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REFERENCES

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