



Senegalia lotterii (Fabaceae) a new species endemic to the Barberton Centre of Endemism, South Africa

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Abstract

Senegalia lotterii is a proposed new species to science, characterized by its paired prickles pointing straight ahead or slightly upwards one of which is often lost due to malformation. This species was found to be a distinct edaphic entity, endemic to the Barberton Centre of Endemism.

Key words: new species, Barberton Centre of Endemism, edaphic

Introduction

In 2002 the Book *Trees and Shrubs of Mpumalanga and Kruger National Park* was published, in it Lötter (2002) announced his find of *Acacia chariessa*, a species formerly only known from Zimbabwe. Much confusion has subsequently arisen as to the identity of the species involved. In an attempt to resolve its ambiguity the author has on separate occasion visited the set locality for investigation.

Senegalia lotterii was found to be a distinct edaphic entity, endemic to the Barberton Centre of Endemism (van Wyk & Smith 2001) hereby described as a new species.

Taxonomic treatment

Senegalia lötterii N. Hahn, *sp. nov.* (Fig. 1)

Differs from all southern African *Senegalia* species with paired prickles pointing straight ahead or slightly upwards one of which often fails to develop (Fig. 2). The species is morphologically similar to the tropical species *Acacia royumae* Oliver (1871: 353) differing from it by its fewer leaflets pairs per pinna 9–17 opposed to 13–31 and smaller pods 30–65 × 10–16 mm opposed to 70–150 × 17–25 mm. *S. lotterii* is geographically separated from *A. royumae* by over 2000 km, ecologically *S. lotterii* is an edaphic specialist growing on ridges of ultramafic intrusions of the Barberton Centre of Endemism (van Wyk & Smith 2001) whereas *A. royumae* is found in low altitude riverine forest and saline swamp forests of northern Mozambique, Tanzanian and Zambia (Ross 1975). *S. lötterii* having prickles in pairs differs from the *S. senegal* (Linnaeus 1753: 521) Britton (1930: 538) group which has its prickles in groups of three, the two outside ones being straight pointing ahead or slightly upwards, the central one downward.

Type:—SOUTH AFRICA. Mpumalanga: Opsaal, 25°40'04.476"S, 31°02'48.588"E, elev. 716 m, 29 December 2007 (fl), N. Hahn 2267 (holotype PRE!; isotype PRU!, ZPB!).

Multi stemmed shrub, 3.5 m high bark grey smooth, young braches covered with lenticels. *Stipules* not spinescent in pairs filiform up to 2.5 mm long. *Prickles* in pairs often one being lost due to malformation, below the nodes, thorns almost straight light brown up to 6 mm long, pointing at 90°–110°. *Leaves* petiole 4.8–11.3 mm long, gland 2.2–3.4 mm long oblanceolate glabrous, rhachis 21.6–90.1 mm long, glabrous often with up to two glands between the upper pinna pairs, pinnae 3–12 pairs, rahillae 20.0–36.9 mm long glabrous, leaflets 9–