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A new species of *Tephrosia* (Leguminosae-Papilionoideae-Millettieae) from Misiones, Argentina

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Abstract

A new species of *Tephrosia* endemic to Argentina is described and illustrated. *Tephrosia fertilis* has affinities with *T. adunca*, based on the type and colour of indumentum, but differs in the relative length of pedicel to bracts, calyx indumentum, presence of a callus and the absence of secretory structure on the standard petal.

Key words: Biodiversity**,** Fabaceae, IUCN, subg. *Barbistyla*, South America, Taxonomy

Introduction

Tephrosia Persoon (1807: 328) with ca. 350 species is the largest genus in the tribe Millettieae (Leguminosae, Papilionoideae) and one of the largest legume genera (Geesink 1984; Schrire 2005). It has a pantropical distribution, occurring mainly in seasonally dry tropical forests, savannas and *campos rupestres* (open rocky field) vegetation (Schrire 2005). *Tephrosia* species are shrubs or subshrubs that are woody base, with leaves imparipinnate, unifoliolate or rarely digitate, 2 to 30 flowers grouped in terminal, axillary or leaf-opposed pseudoracemes, calyces campanulate, 5-toothed, and persistent in fruit; ovaries with 4 to 20 ovules; fruits a typical dehiscent legume; and seeds with an embryo with a folded radicle (Bosman & Haas 1983).

Since its description, by Persoon (1807), the most significant contributions to the taxonomy of *Tephrosia* have been by made by De Candolle (1825), Bentham (1862, 1865), Baker (1871, 1876), Hassler (1919), Wood (1949) and Brummitt (1980). The most recent infrageneric classification was proposed by Brummitt (1980), which divided the genus into two subgenera, *Tephrosia* subg. *Tephrosia* Persoon (1807: 328) and *Tephrosia* subg. *Barbistyla* Brummitt (1980: 460). The diagnostic characters that supported this subgeneric classification were the presence or absence of indumentum along the style, and the presence or absence of trichomes at the base of the stigma.

Tephrosia is represented in South America by 18 species, two of which are new to science (Queiroz 2012). South American *Tephrosia* are diagnosed mainly by having leaflets with secondary venation oblique to main vein, the pseudoracemose inflorescence, standard petal bearing callosity and secretory structures, the typical linear dehiscent pods, and smooth seed testa. The species here in proposed appeared to have morphological characters distinguishing it from all currently known *Tephrosia*. It is described and illustrated, and compared with morphologically similar species.

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