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Massonia amoena (Asparagaceae, Scilloideae), a striking new species from the Eastern Cape, South Africa

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Abstract

As part of an ongoing study towards a taxonomic revision of the genus *Massonia* Houtt., a new species, *Massonia amoena* Mart.-Azorín, M.Pinter & Wetschnig, is here described from the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. This new species is characterized by the leaves bearing heterogeneous circular to elongate pustules and the strongly reflexed perigone segments at anthesis. It is at first sight related to *Massonia jasminiflora* Burch. ex Baker, *M. wittebergensis* U.Müll.-Doblies & D.Müll.-Doblies and *M. saniensis* Wetschnig, Mart.-Azorín & M.Pinter, but differs in vegetative and floral characters, as well as in its allopatric distribution. A complete morphological description of the new species and data on biology, habitat, and distribution are presented.

Key words: flora, Hyacinthaceae, Massonieae, Southern Africa, taxonomy

Introduction

Hyacinthaceae sensu APG (2003) includes ca. 700–1000 species of bulbous plants distributed through Africa, Europe and Asia, with a single genus, *Oziroë* Rafinesque (1837: 53), occurring in South America (Speta 1998a, b, APG 2003, Martínez-Azorín *et al.* 2014). Within this group, four monophyletic clades were accepted as the subfamilies Hyacinthoideae, Ornithogaloideae, Oziroëoideae and Urgineoideae (Speta 1998b, Pfosser & Speta 1999, Manning *et al.* 2004, Martínez-Azorín *et al.* 2011). Alternatively, the family Hyacinthaceae is treated as Asparagaceae subfamily Scilloideae, and consequently the former subfamilies are reduced to the tribes Hyacintheae, Ornithogaleae, Oziroëeae and Urgineeae (APG 2009, Chase *et al.* 2009). However, we favour Hyacinthaceae at family rank based on morphological grounds.

The tribe Massonieae, which is included in subfamily Hyacinthoideae (Speta 1998a, b, Wetschnig *et al.* 2002, Pfosser *et al.* 2003, Manning *et al.* 2004) has shown important changes regarding generic circumscription in the last decades (see Wetschnig *et al.* 2014 for a general overview on this topic).

The genus *Podocallis* Salisbury (1866: 17), which has been considered to be a synonym of *Massonia* Houttuyn (1780: 424), was described as follows: "Omnia ut in *Massonia* praeter Corollae lacinias basi non replicatas; Filamenta breviora, late cuneata; Stylumque basi in Conum tumidum." Salisbury based his new genus on a collection by Burchell from "regione fluminis Visch Rivier" with perigone segments not reflexed and conical gynoecium. Moreover, Salisbury included a single species in *Podocallis* as follows: "Species 1. Massonia Nivea Burch.". It is worth mentioning that the name *Massonia nivea* Burch. ex Salisb. was not validly published in the view of Art. 36.1(a) (cf. McNeill *et al.* 2012) as Salisbury regards "Massonia Nivea Burch." as a species of *Podocallis* and not of *Massonia* (J. McNeill *pers. comm.*). Furthermore, the combination *Podocallis nivea* was also not validly published since no explicit indication of that combination was made in the original description (cf. IPNI 2014). In any case, the genus *Podocallis* differs from the type of *Massonia* by the not reflexed free portions of the perigone segments and the thickened conical style tapering from the ovary.

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