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New species and combinations in *Acanthaceae* from Somalia

Abstract


Six species from Somalia, *Barleria albomarginata*, *B. dentata*, *B. glaucobracteata*, *B. ilicifolia*, *Hypoestes cinerea* and *Justicia carnosa*, are described as new to science, *J. arenaria* is proposed as a new name for *J. ovalifolia* var. *psammophila* and the new combination *B. brevispina* is proposed for *B. linearifolia* var. *brevispina*.

Key words: *Barleria*, *Hypoestes*, *Justicia*, taxonomy, Horn of Africa region.

During revisional work in various genera of *Acanthaceae* for the Flora of Somalia project, six previously undescribed species were encountered. They are formally published here, along with a new name and a new combination at species level for taxa previously treated as varieties. The species are arranged in the same sequence as they have in the Flora (Hedrén in Thulin 2006).


*Justicia arenaria* is known only from coastal sand dunes at 10-40 m altitude in southern Somalia. It is closely related to the widespread and variable *J. flava* (Vahl) Vahl, but differs by its almost orbicular, thick and somewhat succulent leaves. Progeny from *Hedberg* 7143 (UPS) cultivated in the Botanical Garden of Uppsala University also developed suborbicular, thick and succulent leaves, showing that these characters are genetically determined.

The species has previously often been recognized as *Justicia ovalifolia* Fiori (e.g., by Cuflodontis 1964: 973). The type material of *J. ovalifolia* is also from near Mogadishu in southern Somalia and has relatively broad, ovate leaves. However, the leaves are thin and herbaceous, and the material is no more than a modification of *J. flava*. The epithet “psammophila” cannot be used for the thick-leaved dune plant at species level because of the existence of *J. psammophila* Mildbr.
**Justicia carnosa** Hedrén, sp. nov.
Holotype: Somalia, 2 km from Mogadishu airport on road to Gezira, 1°59’N, 45°15’E, 4.5.1990, Thulin & Hedrén 7167 (UPS; isotypes FT, K).

Species nova *Justiciae debili* (Forssk.) Vahl affinis, a qua floribus minoribus corolla 5-7.7 mm longa et foliis rotundatis carnosis apice saepe emarginatis differt.

Perennial herb, branched from the base with ascending stems up to c. 15 cm tall and up to 3 mm in diameter at base; young stems greyish green, very densely pubescent with 0.15-0.3 mm long erect to slightly retrorse hairs, old stems greyish. Leaves green, veins not prominent, densely pubescent with 0.15-0.3 mm long, spreading hairs; blade succulent, obovate to orbicular, up to 10 × 12 mm, base attenuate to shortly attenuate, apex obtuse to emarginate; petiole up to 4 mm long. Flowers single or few together in sessile clusters in upper leaf axils, rarely opposite; bracts leaf-like, up to 5.5 × 5 mm, without long hairs along margins; bracteoles inconspicuous. Calyx lobes 5, narrowly triangular, with a thin yellowish margin, very densely pubescent with c. 0.1 mm long, erect, glandular and eglandular hairs, c. 3.5-3.8 × 0.3-0.5 mm in flower, up to 4.6 × 0.6 mm in fruit. Corolla pink with purplish markings at lower lip near throat, 5.7-7 mm long; tube up to 4-5.2 mm long; upper lip 2.6-4 mm long; lower lip 3-4 mm long and 4.2-6 mm wide. Stamens with free part of filaments 3.5-3.7 mm long; anthers greenish, 1.2-1.5 mm long, cells displaced by 0.2-0.3 mm, tail of lower cell c. 0.5 mm long. Capsule 2-seeded, up to 5.6 × 2.3 mm, greenish, densely pubescent with 0.2-0.3 mm long, slightly retrorse, eglandular hairs. Seeds blackish, smooth and flattened, up to 2.2 mm in diameter.

Distribution and habitat. – Known only from the type collection from southern Somalia, where it grows on open coastal dunes with white sand at c. 5-10 m altitude.

*Justicia debilis* in a strict sense is characterized by its herbaceous leaves with obtuse to acute apex, flowers with 9-11 mm long corolla, discrete axillary spike-like inflorescences and bracts usually with a dense, whitish indumentum of up to c. 1 mm long, thin (c. 0.03 mm wide), patent hairs along the margin. In Somalia it is restricted to the northern provinces and it sometimes approaches *J. carnosa* in having few-flowered inflorescences and non-ciliate bracts. However, *J. carnosa* is still distinct by its rounded, succulent leaves, often emarginate at the apex, and by its small flowers with the corolla only 5.7-7 mm long.

*Justicia bracteata* differs from *J. carnosa* by being an annual weed of cultivated and disturbed areas and is characterized by having autogamous flowers arranged in many-flowered axillary spikes, which may be lax, branched at lower nodes and confluent, forming a compound spike in the upper part of the stem, and by having bracts with a conspicuous whitish indumentum of up to 2 mm long, thick (c. 0.05-0.1 mm wide), patent hairs along the margin.
Fig. 1. Barleria dentata – A: portion of flowering plant; B: corolla opened out; C: leaf; D: bract; E: bracteoles; F: upper calyx lobe; G: lower calyx lobe; H: lateral calyx lobes. – All drawn after Thulin & al. 10115 (UPS).
Perennial herb or shrublet, 25-30 cm tall, sparsely branched with ascending stems; vegetative parts bluish grey with a very dense indumentum of appressed, c. 0.1 mm long, eglandular hairs. Leaf blades ovate, up to 15-21 × 10-15 mm, apex obtuse, base shortly attenuate; petiole c. 1-2 mm long. Flowers in 3-6 cm long, unidirectional, olive green spikes (zig-zag monochasia) clustered in upper parts of stems; inflorescence leaves densely pubescent with c. 0.3 mm long, spreading, eglandular and glandular hairs; bracts narrowly oblanceolate, obtuse, green, with indumentum as inflorescence leaves, fused for about half their length, 7-9 mm long; bracteoles linear-lanceolate, acute, c. 7.3 mm long. Calyx lobes narrowly triangular-subulate, thin, hyaline with green veins, partly connate, c. 7 × 0.7 mm in flower. Corolla purple, c. 20 mm long; tube narrowly cylindrical, twisted, somewhat widened in the upper portion, c. 11 mm long; larger lip c. 9 × 5.5 mm; smaller lip entire, acuminate, c. 7.3 mm long. Stamens with the free part c. 7.3 mm long, fused to the corolla tube for 10.5 mm at the base; anthers 1-celled, purplish, c. 1.5 mm long. Style c. 14.5 mm long; stigma lobes equal, c. 0.3 mm long; ovary c. 4.5 mm, densely pubescent with c. 0.3 mm long erect to somewhat retrorse hairs in the upper part. Capsule c. 8 × 1.8-2.2 mm, densely pubescent with c. 0.2 mm long patent hairs, sterile in lower third. Seeds black, shining, c. 2 mm in diameter.

Additional specimens seen. – Somalia: Mudug Region: Cutline, 4 km from the sea, 5°58′N, 48°54′E, 28.5.1979, Gillett, Hemming & Watson 22147 (K); 7 km SW Hobyo, 12.7.1987, Wieland 4725 (K).

Distribution and habitat. – Known only from northeastern Somalia, where it grows on semidesert alluvial plains at 300-440 m altitude.

Barleria dentata Hedrén, sp. nov.
Holotype: Somalia, Bari Region, 20 km SE of Ufeyn, 10°31′N, 49°50′E, 3.1.2000, Thulin, Abdi Dahir & Ahmed Osman 10115 (UPS; isotypes FT, K). – Fig. 1.

Species nova a Barleria acanthoide Vahl foliis grosse dentatis et calyce non scarioso lobis externis lanceolatis differt.

Shrub up to 40-50 cm tall, much branched, almost completely glabrous, occasionally with a few c. 0.3 mm long hairs at nodes, etc.; young stems greyish green, old stems grey. Leaf blades with coarse, spine-like teeth, narrowly lanceolate with white margin, greyish green on both sides, up to 13-15 × 6-7 mm including up to 3-5 mm long apical tooth and 1-2 pairs of up to 1.5 mm long lateral teeth, apex mucronate, base attenuate; petiole indistinct. Flowers solitary or in short scorpionoid cymes in leaf axils; bracts leaf-like; bracteoles unequal, mostly transformed into up to 17 mm long spines, occasionally with a few short lateral spines. Calyx not scarious; 2 outer lobes similar, narrowly lanceolate, up to 13 mm long, with 3-4 mm long apical spine, sometimes with few short sublateral teeth; 2 inner lobes narrowly lanceolate, transformed into spines, up to 8 mm long. Corolla white, turning blue on drying, c. 20 mm long; tube c. 9 mm long. Stamens 2, with 2-celled anthers; staminodes 3. Ripe capsules not seen.

Additional specimens seen. – Somalia: Bari Region: 10°31′N, 49°51′E, Beckert 575 (K); between Bosaso and Iskushuban, 10°27′N, 49°47′E, Gillett 23051 (K); 42 km on road from Iskushuban to Bosaso, 26.11.1985, Thulin & Warfa 5567 (K, UPS); near Scusciuban, Hemming 1845 (K); ibid., Popov 57/12 (K).

Distribution and habitat. – Known only from northeastern Somalia, where it grows on semidesert alluvial plains at 300-440 m altitude.
Fig. 2. *Barleria albomarginata* – A: portion of flowering plant; B: corolla opened out; C: bracts, bracteoles and calyx; D: capsule; E: bracts; F: bracteoles; G: lower calyx lobe; H: upper calyx lobe; I: lateral calyx lobes. – All drawn after Thulin & al. 10173 (UPS).
The available material is very homogeneous and distinct. Barleria dentata is probably related to B. acanthoides Vahl, but differs clearly in the leaves with coarsely dentate margins and in the non-scarious calyx with narrowly lanceolate outer lobes. In B. acanthoides the leaves are entire and the calyx is scarios with ovate outer lobes. B. dentata is somewhat similar to B. albomarginata Hedrén in the dentation of the leaves, but is clearly distinct in the non-scarious calyx with narrowly lanceolate outer lobes, and by having white flowers often arranged in axillary scorpoid cymes.

**Barleria albomarginata** Hedrén, *sp. nov.*

Holotype: Somalia, Bari Region, Cal Miskaat, N of Dasan in Dal Io’ad area, 11°13’N, 49°49’E, 7.1.2000, Thulin, Abdi Dahir & Ahmed Osman 10173 (UPS; isotype K). – Fig. 2.

Species nova Barleriae paolii Fiori affinis, a qua foliis albomarginatis dentatis differt.

Shrub up to 50-60 cm tall, much branched; young stems green, densely pubescent with c. 0.2 mm long, patent to spreading hairs, old stems greyish. Leaves, including those of axillary shoots, ovate with conspicuous white margin, pungent, up to 10-15 × 7-10 mm, including up to 2 mm long apical spine and 2-4 pairs of equally long lateral spines, green above, paler beneath, moderately pubescent with somewhat antrorse, up to 0.2 mm long hairs mostly at veins and margins, base attenuate; cystoliths in tandem pairs, each up to 0.2 mm long; petiole indistinct, up to c. 2 mm long. Flowers solitary in leaf axils; bracts leaf-like; bracteoles with no or reduced lamina, transformed into up to 20-28 mm long spines with about 3-4 pairs of c. 1-1.5 mm long lateral spines. Calyx scarious; 2 outer lobes similar, whitish with prominent green veins, lanceolate to narrowly ovate, up to 18-20 × 5-11 mm long, margin with apical spine and several pairs of lateral thin spines up to 1.5 mm long; 2 inner lobes narrowly triangular-lanceolate, up to c. 6 mm long. Corolla blue, rarely white and turning blue on drying, 26-39 mm long; tube 19-24 mm long. Stamens 4, with 2-celled anthers; staminode 1. Style c. 33 mm long. Capsule 4-seeded with a short beak, up to 12 mm long, glabrous.

Additional specimens seen. – SOMALIA: without precise locality, Drake-Brockman 518 (K). – WOQQOYI GALBEED REGION: Ga-an Libah, Bally 11705 (K). – SANAAG REGION: Dayaha, 15 mls WSW Ergavo, Bally 11791 (K); 15 km N Ergavo, 10°47’N, 47°24’E, Hemming & Watson 3211 (K); Karin Hora Tiro, 10°57’N, 48°52’E, Newbould 8961 (UPS). – BARI REGION: Assah, 11°20’N, 49°49’E, Newbould 1072 (K); Cal Miskaat, between Toh and Bahaya area, 11°18’-11°24’N, 49°49’-49°50’E, 26.11.1986, Thulin & Warfa 6060 (UPS).

Distribution and habitat. – Widespread along the escarpment of northern Somalia, where it grows in evergreen bushland with Buxus, Juniperus, Olea, Pistacia, etc., in stony or rocky places on limestone at 1350-1950 m altitude.

The available material is very uniform. Barleria albomarginata is probably related to B. paolii Fiori in southern Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, but differs in its dentated leaves with white margin (not entire with green margin). It resembles B. dentata in the leaves, but differs from this by its scarious calyx and by always having solitary flowers. For differences to B. ilicifolia, see under the next species.

**Barleria ilicifolia** Hedrén, *sp. nov.*

Holotype: Somalia, Woqooyi Galbeed Region, Dukasia NW of Borama on road to Djibouti, 4.10.1954, Bally 9950 (K). – Fig. 3.

Species nova Barleriae albomarginatae Hedrén arte affinis, a qua corolla alba multo longiore et calyce lobis externis majoribus bene distincta.

Shrub up to 45 cm tall, much branched from the base; young stems green, moderately densely pubescent with c. 0.2 mm long patent to spreading hairs, old stems greyish. Leaves including those
of axillary shoots ovate with conspicuous white margin, pungent, crenate, up to 20 × 10 mm, including an up to 2 mm long apical spine and 2-4 pairs of equally long lateral spines, green above, paler beneath, glabrous except for some appressed, c. 0.2 mm long hairs along veins, base attenuate; cystoliths in tandem pairs, each up to 0.2 mm long; petiole indistinct, up to c. 0.15 mm long. Flowers solitary in leaf axils; bracts leaf-like; bracteoles with no or reduced lamina, transformed into up to 40 mm long spines with about 2-4 pairs of lateral teeth. Calyx scarious; outer lobes similar, whitish with prominent green veins, ovate, up to 35 × 20 mm, upper with apex extending into a fine spine, lower with 1 or 2 bristle-like teeth at apex; margin with bristle-like teeth c. 1 mm long; inner lobes lanceolate, up to c. 6 mm long. Corolla white, turning blue on drying, 77-100 mm long; tube 64-90 mm. Stamens 4, with 2-celled anthers, inserted at about 40 mm from the base of the corolla tube, longer ones c. 27 mm long with anther c. 2.5 mm long, shorter ones up to c. 6 mm long, included in the tube; staminode 1, c. 2 mm long. Style c. 33 mm long. Capsule not seen.

Distribution and habitat. – Known only from the type collection from northwestern Somalia, where it grows on rocky limestone slopes at c. 1460 m altitude.

Barleria ilicifolia is closely related to B. albomarginata, with which it agrees in the dentate leaves with white margin. However, it differs markedly in the white (not blue) and 77-100 mm
Holotype: Somalia, Bay Region, between Uenèio and Butiài, 30.7.1913, Paoli 793 (FT).

Barleria brevispina is found in Acacia-Commiphora bushland, scrubland, Sporobolus ruspolianus grassland, etc., usually on rocky or sandy ground, at 130-1200 m altitude. It is widespread in Somalia and is also known from eastern Ethiopia and northern Kenya.

The species is clearly distinct from Barleria linearifolia Rendle, a species distributed in central and southern Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, by its up to 10-13 mm long spines on a common stalk up to 3 mm long (spines and common stalk longer in B. linearifolia), but is variable in size and shape of leaves and floral parts. Plants from northern Somalia are low with relatively short leaves, corolla up to c. 25 mm long and calyx up to c. 11 mm long. Most plants from central and southern Somalia are more slender and tall with leaves up to 95 mm long, corolla up to 40 mm long and calyx up to 23 mm long, but there are also plants with an intermediate appearance. Collections from Kenya and Ethiopia agree with the southern form. B. brevispina R. Br. is a nomen nudum without any nomenclatural status.

Barleria glaucobracteata Hedrén, sp. nov.
Holotype: Somalia, Gedo Region, 7-8 km S of Luuq, 1988, Somali Medicinal Plant Project SMP 210 (UPS; isotype K).

Species nova a Barleria linearifolia Rendle bracteis cinereis, bracteolis linearibus margine hispidis et nodis inflorescentiarum multifloris differt.

Pungent subshrub up to 15-30 cm tall, much branched from the base; stems almost glabrous to finely pubescent with c. 0.15 mm long, patent hairs. Leaf blades narrowly oblanceolate, up to 45-70 × 11-17 mm, green above, paler beneath, with a sparse to fairly dense indumentum of up to c. 0.8 mm long, appressed hairs, apex mucronate with weak spine up to c. 2 mm long, base attenuate; cystoliths in tandem pairs, each up to 0.15-0.3 mm long; petioles indistinct, up to c. 10 mm long. Axillary spines 4 in each leaf axil, up to 16-30 mm long, on up to c. 10 mm long common stalk. Inflorescence dense, composed of contracted upper nodes with up to 3-flowered axillary cymes; bracts leaf-like, gradually more narrow and bluish white towards the apex of the stem, up to 32 × 8 mm; bracteoles bluish white, transformed into spines with almost no lamina, up to 28 mm long, with up to c. 0.5 mm long, somewhat antrorse, bristle-like hairs along margins and c. 0.3 mm long, patent, glandular hairs. Calyx soft, glabrous, bluish white; outer lobes ± equal, narrowly ovate-linear, up to 15 × 2.7 mm with a narrow linear portion for about half the length; inner lobes lanceolate-linear, c. 13 × 1.3 mm. Corolla white, 23-34 mm long; lobes subequal, c. 10-14 × 6-9 mm; tube 11-17 mm long. Stamens 4, fused to tube for 5-10 mm at the base, 2 exserted stamens with free part up to c. 14-23 mm, 2 included stamens with free part c. 2-3 mm long; short staminodal trace present. Capsule not seen.

Additional specimens seen. – SOMALIA: GEDO REGION: 20 km on road between Garbaharrey and Qansaxdeere, 5.6.1989, Thulin & Bashir Mohamed 6918 (K, UPS); 54 km S of Garba Harre on Bardera road 2°53’N, 42°17’E, Gillett & Hemming 24772 (K); 17 km from Luuq bridge, 3°40’N, 42°30’E, Hemming & Desmukh JESS 270 (K); 16.5 km from Luuq bridge, 3°40’N, 42°30’E, Hemming & Desmukh JESS 323 (K).

Distribution and habitat. – Known only from southwestern Somalia, where it grows in Acacia-Commiphora bushland, open shrubland, on limestone ridges, gypseous limestone slopes, or in reddish stony soil over limestone at 150-300 m altitude.
Barleria glaucobracteata is related to the more widespread B. linearifolia (see above), but differs by having inflorescences with more than one flower per node, bluish white bracts and linear bracteoles with bristle-like hairs along the margin. A collection from central Somalia, Gillett, Hemming & Watson 22097 (K) from 23 km S of Jeriban at 7°01′N, 48°52′E, appears to be related to this species, but differs by having shorter leaves (up to c. 2.5 cm long), bracts and bracteoles, all with few bristle-like hairs and densely dotted with sessile glands on the lower surface towards the base, and broader calyx lobes with a more distinctly delineated spine in the upper half. More material is needed.

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References

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