

A NEW SPECIES OF *TEUCRIUM* FROM NORTHERN SOMALIA

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The new species *Teucrium eburneum* (Labiatae), from the limestone escarpment of north-east Somalia and belonging to sect. *Teucrium*, is described and illustrated.

INTRODUCTION

The only species of *Teucrium* hitherto recorded from Somalia is *T. polium* L. (Cufodontis, 1962: 804) in sect. *Chamaedrys* (Mill.) Schreb. according to the classification by Kästner (1989), but probably more than one taxon is involved in this complex in Somalia. In the present paper a recently discovered new species, quite unrelated to *T. polium* and apparently best placed in sect. *Teucrium* is described from northern Somalia.

***Teucrium eburneum* Thulin, sp. nov. Fig 1.**

Ab aliis speciebus cognatis sectionis *Teucriti* combinatione caulibus albotomentosis, foliis integris vel leviter trilobis, bracteis trilobis, floribus subsessilibus, corollis 15-16mm longis, eburneis, tubo minus quam 1mm annulo pilis longis ad orem munito, et mericarpis hirtis differt.

Shrublet 10-30cm tall. *Stems* erect, terete, covered by a tomentum of short white hairs. *Leaves* sessile or practically so, narrowly elliptic to narrowly obovate, 10-22 x 4-8mm, narrowly cuneate at the base, subacute at the apex, fairly thick, drying yellowish green; both surfaces pubescent with short hairs, particularly along veins, and covered by minute sessile glands, margins flat or somewhat revolute, entire or, in the upper leaves, shallowly 3-lobed, with 3 veins prominent on the lower surface. *Inflorescence* fairly dense, spicate, with subsessile flowers in 2-flowered whorls; bracts sessile or subsessile, leaf-like \pm obovate, 7-11mm long, 3-lobed. *Calyx* campanulate c.8mm long, not or scarcely enlarging in fruit, pubescent with short hairs and covered by minute sessile glands; teeth subequal \pm narrowly triangular, 4.8-5.6 mm long. *Corolla* cream, 15-16mm long, pubescent mainly on veins outside, puberulous towards base inside, and with a curved line of long hairs in front of the points of insertion of the filaments; tube less than 1mm long; lateral lobes 4.5-5 x 2.8-3.2mm; median lobe c.8 x 5.5mm; *Stamens*: filaments c.10m long, strongly curved, pubescent at the base; anthers c.1.2mm long. *Ovary* pilose; style c.11mm long, glabrous, with subequal lobes c.1mm long. *Nutlets* elliptic c.2.4 x 1.6mm, densely pubescent.

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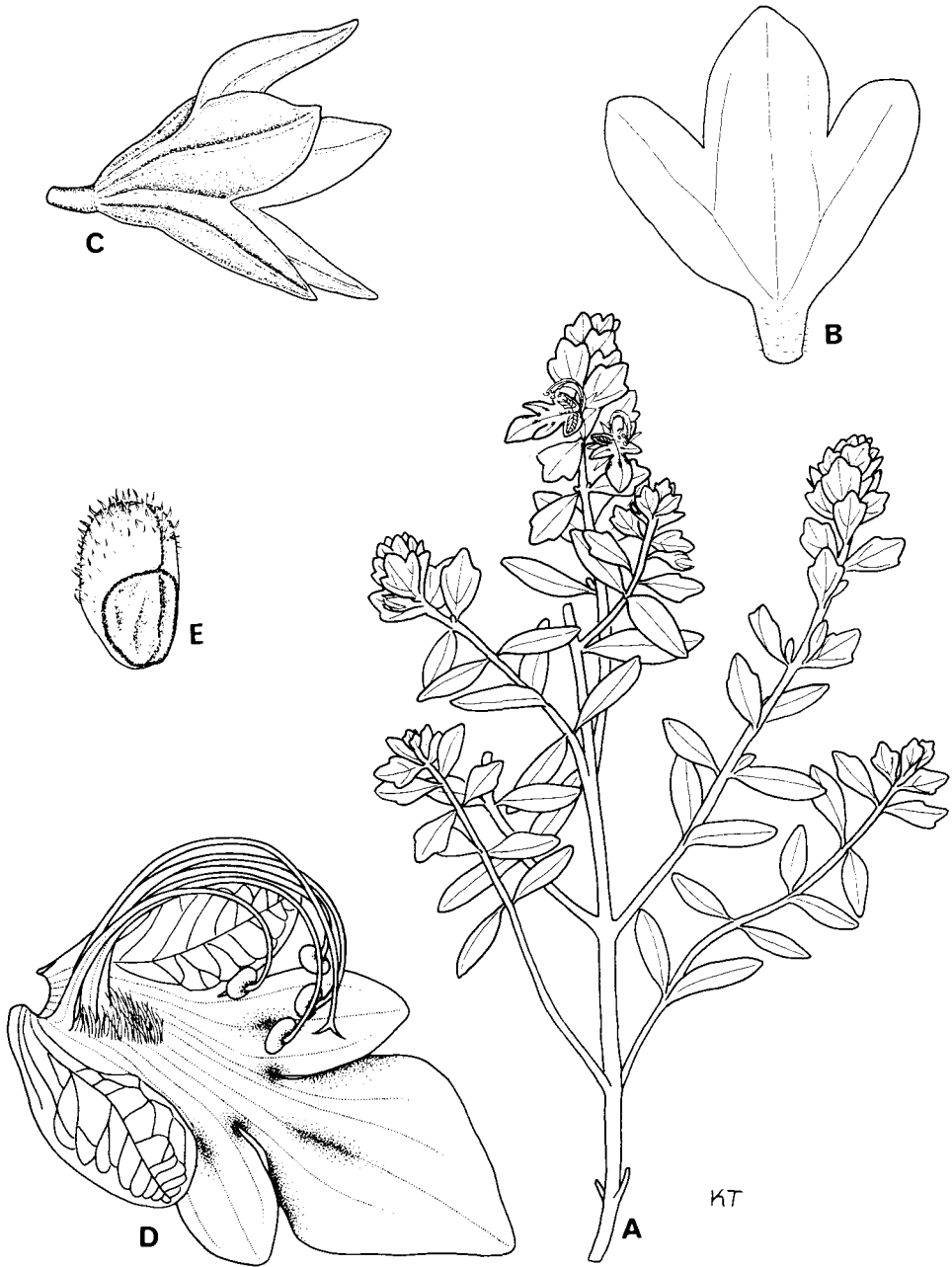


FIG. 1. *Teucrium eburneum*. A, habit x 0.8; B, bract x 5; C, calyx x 5; D, corolla opened up, showing also stamens and style x 5; E, nutlet x 10. Drawn from holotype.

Type: Somalia, Bari Region, Al Miskat Mtd, Bahaya, 11°18'N, 49°49' E, 26 xi 1986, Thulin & Warfa 6086 (holo. UPS, iso. E).

T. eburneum is only known from the type locality, where it grows in a stony limestone slope at 1500–1600m altitude. Associated species include *Haplophyllum sanguineum*, *Brassica somaliensis*, *Thesium hararensis*, *Campylanthus incanus*, *Salvia somalensis*, *Neogaillonia calcicola* and *Cyclamen somalense*, most of which are more or less narrow endemics in northern Somalia

The affinity of *T. eburneum* seems to be with species in sect. *Teucrium* (see Kästner, 1989). No member of this section has previously been recorded from north-east tropical Africa (Cufodontis, 1982), but *T. oliverianum* Gingins ex Benth., and *T. orientale* L. are known from the Arabian Peninsula (see King, 1988). However, *T. eburneum* differs markedly from both these species in, e.g. its subsessile, cream flowers (pedicels 6mm or more long and corolla violet to lilac-blue in *T. oliverianum* and *T. orientale*) its entire to shallowly 3-lobed leaves (deeply 3–9-lobed in *T. oliverianum* and bipinnatifid in *T. orientale*) and in its less than 1mm long corolla tube (2–3mm long in the other two species).

Other possible relatives are the east Mediterranean *T. creticum* L. and *T. brevifolium* Schreb, both with entire leaves. From these *T. eburneum* differs, among other things, in its white-tomentose stems, much broader and 3-lobed (not entire) bracts, and in its subsessile (not shortly pedicelled) flowers. Another fairly similar species is the neotropical *T. cubense* Jacq., which has lobed bracts like *T. eburneum* and, most strikingly, a ring of long hairs in the mouth of the corolla tube. However, *T. eburneum* differs from this, e.g. in its mostly entire (not deeply crenate to pinnatifid) leaves, broader calyx lobes, and cream flowers. The distinctly hairy mouth of the corolla tube in both *T. eburneum* and *T. cubense* may reflect a natural relationship, but a better knowledge of the morphology, infrageneric structure and phylogeny of the genus as a whole is needed for conclusiveness.

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