

A NOTE ON *COLPOON* (SANTALACEAE)

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When, in 1989, I wrote an account of Santalaceae for *Flora Zambesiaca* (which account will not be published for several more years), I had no hesitation in including *Colpoon* Berg. in *Osyris* L., as A. De Candolle (1857) had originally done. The morphology of stem and leaf is identical: distinctive flattened twigs, branchlets ribbed by vascular strands running out into the midrib of the leaf, and both leaf surfaces closely and minutely white-dotted (these dots are probably the ‘abundant cluster and sphaerocrystals noted in the mesophyll of *Osyris abyssinica*’ by Metcalfe & Chalk (1950, p. 1197)).

Hill (1915: 209) went further and included, without comment, *Colpoon compressum* as a synonym of *Osyris abyssinica* A. Rich., that is, *O. lanceolata* Hochst. & Steud. It was possibly N. E. Brown who revived *Colpoon compressum* as a separate genus and species: he remarked (1932: 464) ‘*Colpoon compressum* Berg. was included here [*Osyris abyssinica*] in F.C. 5, 2: 208, but it has opp. lvs. and certain differences in the fls’. There is, however, no essential difference in floral detail or in the structure of the inflorescence; those given by Stauffer (1961) are illusory. For example, the flowers of *Osyris lanceolata* are hermaphrodite and male, the plants being androdioecious (not female and male, dioecious, as given by Stauffer p. 390, table 1), and the hermaphrodite flowers may occur in 2–3-flowered dichasia (not flowers always solitary or in umbellate clusters (Stauffer); these umbellate clusters also occur in *O. compressa*, but this was overlooked by Stauffer).

Dr L. E. Kers, Curator of the Bergius Herbarium, Stockholm, was kind enough to send me a photocopy of Bergius’s original specimen.

***Osyris compressa* (Berg.) A. DC. in DC., Prodr. 14: 634 (1857).**

Type: South Africa, Cape Province, *Grubb* (SBT, n.v.; photocopy E).

Syn.: *Colpoon compressum* Berg., *Descr. Pl. Cap.* 38, t. 1, fig. 1 (1767).

Fusanus compressus (Berg.) Murray, *Syst. Veg.* ed. 13: 765 (1774).

Thesium colpoon L.f., *Suppl.* 161 (1782), nom. illegit.

Euonymus colpoon Lam., *Encycl. Méth.* 2: 574 (1788), nom. illegit.

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