

## THE STATUS OF THYLACODRABA

O. E. SCHULZ

I. C. HEDGE

While working through some of the Crucifers collected by Dr. P. H. Davis in S.E. Turkey, two gatherings of the same species were provisionally named as *Thylacodraba thylacocarpa* (Nábělek) O. E. Schulz. The genus was created by Nábělek under the illegitimate name *Drabella*\* (Acta Bot. Bohemica, iii, 32, cum tab: 1924) and distinguished from *Draba* on the fruit shape, which was compared to that of *Capsella bursa-pastoris* L. that is, an almost obcordate silicule, retuse at the apex.

The two Davis gatherings, D. 24086 and D. 24133, agreed with the description and dimension of Nábělek's species; likewise, the illustration was very similar to Dr. Davis's plants in habit, leaf shape, indumentum and inflorescence. However, the figures of the gynoeceium which showed a short style on the ovary and a markedly retuse silicule were not completely matched by the recent collections in which the styles were longer and the fruits were not retuse. However, as Plate 13 illustrates, there is considerable variation in the shape of the gynoeceium in D. 24133. As with Nábělek's collection, most of the fruits in the Davis specimen were immature and, in many cases, stunted and apparently not going to mature. In some, only one ovule was developing, giving the young fruit a curiously lopsided appearance; in others, two ovules were developing at the top of the ovary with a resultant obovate form. Considering this variation in shape of juvenile fruits, the differences between Nábělek's obcordate silicule and Davis's obovate silicule become less fundamental.

The number of ovules in the ovary of *Thylacodraba* was given as 2 or 4; the same condition occurred in Davis's gathering.

Although it has not been possible to see the type specimen of *Thylacodraba thylacocarpa*, the great measure of agreement with the type description, combined with the fact that both the Nábělek and the Davis plants were gathered on the same mountain massif at roughly the same altitude, makes it unlikely that two different species are involved. There is, indeed, every reason for believing that D. 24086 and D. 24133 are conspecific with *Thylacodraba thylacocarpa*.

With the additional material of *Thylacodraba*, its right to generic status can be further examined. Nábělek himself remarks in his discussion about the genus "... because of the immature silicules and seeds it was not possible to determine [the plant] with absolute certainty and, for this reason, it should perhaps be included in *Draba* and form a new section *Thylacodraba* based on the shape of the silicule"! Nábělek's doubts are confirmed with the additional material. Although there were no completely mature fruits, one shoot bore an almost ripe fruit and another the skeletal remains of a previous year's mature fruit. These showed without doubt that the adult fruit of *Thylacodraba* is ovate and not obcordate and

\* Antedated by *Drabella* Fourn. in Ann. Soc. Linn. Lyon, N.S. xvi, 335 (1868).

retuse: the character of a *Draba*. As fruit shape was the only definitive way in which *Thylacodraba* was separated from *Draba*, the *raison d'être* of the genus disappears.

There is also no reason why this plant should be placed in a new section of *Draba*, as Nábělek suggested. It fits within the existing sect. *Chrysodraba* DC. The absence of mature fruits makes it difficult to place it exactly within the section despite the unusually small number (4) of ovules—if this is, in fact, a constant character. There is a considerable similarity of habit with *D. pulchella* Willd., a high alpine species from N. Iran and Iraq. Although the number of ovules in this species is usually given as 8–14, in the Bornmüller gathering of 6254 of 1902, *D. pulchella* Willd. var. *hebecarpa* Bornm., the ovules varied in number from 4–9. However, in the absence of a convincing match for the Cilo Dağ plant and until more material of this interesting species is collected, it is best treated as a somewhat anomalous member of sect. *Chrysodraba*.

***Draba thylacocarpa* (Nábělek) Hedge, comb. nov.**

Syn.: *Drabella thylacocarpa* Nábělek in Acta Bot. Bohemica, iii, 32 (1924).

*Thylacodraba thylacocarpa* (Náb.) O. E. Schulz in Engl. & Prantl, Natürl. Pflanzenfam., 2 Aufl. xviiib, 516 (1935).

TURKEY. Prov. Hakkâri: Cilo Tepe, 10 km. W. of Cilo Tepe, 3120 m. (ascending to 3500 m.), rocky slope, perennial, fls. lutei, 9 Aug. 1954, Davis & O. Polunin (D. 24133—K, BM, E); Cilo Tepe, 3120 m. rocky slopes, perennial, loose cushions, fl. stems erect., fls. lutei, 8 Aug. 1954, Davis & O. Polunin (D. 24086—K, BM, E). In montibus Ğelo dit. Ğulamerek, in fissuris rupium calcariarum ad tentoria aestiva Djezra, alt.c. 2700 m., 4 Aug. 1910, Nábělek, Inter Turcico-Persicum 1909, Nr. 1315 (typus *Drabella thylacocarpa* Nábělek—in herb. Nábělek, Mlynany, Czechoslovakia, non visus).

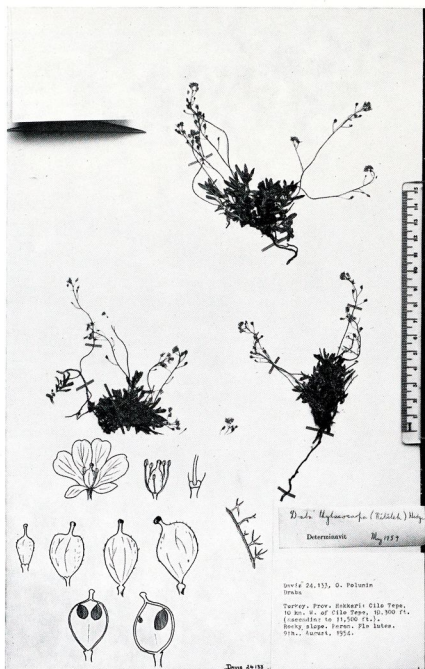


PLATE 13. *Draba thylacocarpa* (Nábělek) Hedge (D. 24133).  
 Inset: floral parts, leaf indumentum and ovary, illustrating variation of shape at  
 fruiting time.