# A NEW THYMELAEA FROM MOROCCO

H. K. TAN*

ABSTRACT. A new species, *Thymelaea gattefossei* H. K. Tan (Thymelaeaceae), is described from W Morocco; it is related to *T. lanuginosa* (Lam.) Brecher.

**Thymelaea gattefossei** H. K. Tan, **sp. nov.** (figs. 1A—Ea, 2).

Affinis *T. lanuginosae* (Lam.) Brecher sed foliis latioribus, ramulis floriferis brevioribus 1–2-foliatis, bracteis ovato-lanceolatis (haud linearibus) differt.

*Frutex* dioecius, 50–100 cm altus (?), ramis gracilibus flexuosis, junioribus incano-lanuginosis, inferne denudatis et glabrescentibus. *Folia* sessilia, herbacea, late ovato-lanceolata, 4–5×2–3 mm, obtusa, utrinque dense incano-lanata, subtus minus tomentosa, imbricata, deinde patula. *Inflorescentia*: flores (staminati) 9–14 in fasciculos congestos ad apicem ramulorum valde abbreviatorum 1–2-foliatorum aggregati, brevissime pedicellati, argenteo vel flavido incano-lanati. *Bracteae* 3–5, ovato-lanceolatae, obtusae, 4 × 1·5 mm, incano-lanuginosae. *Flores staminati* anguste infundibuliformes, 6 mm longi, intus glabri; lobae 1·5 mm longae, late ovatae, obtusae; ovarium rudimentarium disco hypogyno minuto provisum. *Flores pistillati* et hermaphroditi ignoti. *Fl.* Febr.–Mar.

Sandy plains with *Chamaerops humilis* L., littoral region.

MOROCCO. Chaouïa, chamaeropaie sur sable á Bouskoura, Février 1937, *Gattefossé* [holo. MPU; as *T canescens* (Schousb.) Endl.]. Chaouïa littoral, SE Casablanca, 23 iii 1937, *Maire* Iter marocc. 28 (MPU).

Recent study of herbarium material collected 40 years ago has led me to recognise a new species, *T. gattefossei*, which is closely related to *T. lanuginosa* (Lam.) Brecher (fig. F-Ka) from S Spain, Gibraltar and Tanger. They share a similar branching habit and greyish indumentum. Brecher (1941) cites the localities of Âïn Saïerni and Bouskoura for specimens of *T. lanuginosa* collected by Gattefossé in 1937 but did not examine the material. Plants from Bouznika, coll. *Pitard* (Jahandiez & Maire, 1932), Oued Bouskoura (Pitard, 1913) and Nouassèr, also collected by Gattefossé, have all been named *T. canescens* (Schousb.) Endl. (an earlier synonym of *T. lanuginosa*). Judging from their distribution, I would expect these records to refer to the new species. The differences between the two are tabulated here:

| | *T. gattefossei* | *T. lanuginosa* |
|---|---|---|
| Inflorescence | At end of very short branchlets with 1–2 leaves so that the fascicles appear ± axillary. | At end of short, densely leafy branchlets so that the fascicles are obviously terminal. |
| | Flowers 9–14 (staminate); bracts 3–5, ovate-lanceolate, 3·5–4×1·5–2 mm. | Flowers usually 7–10; bracts 7–10, linear-lanceolate, 6–7×1·5 mm. |

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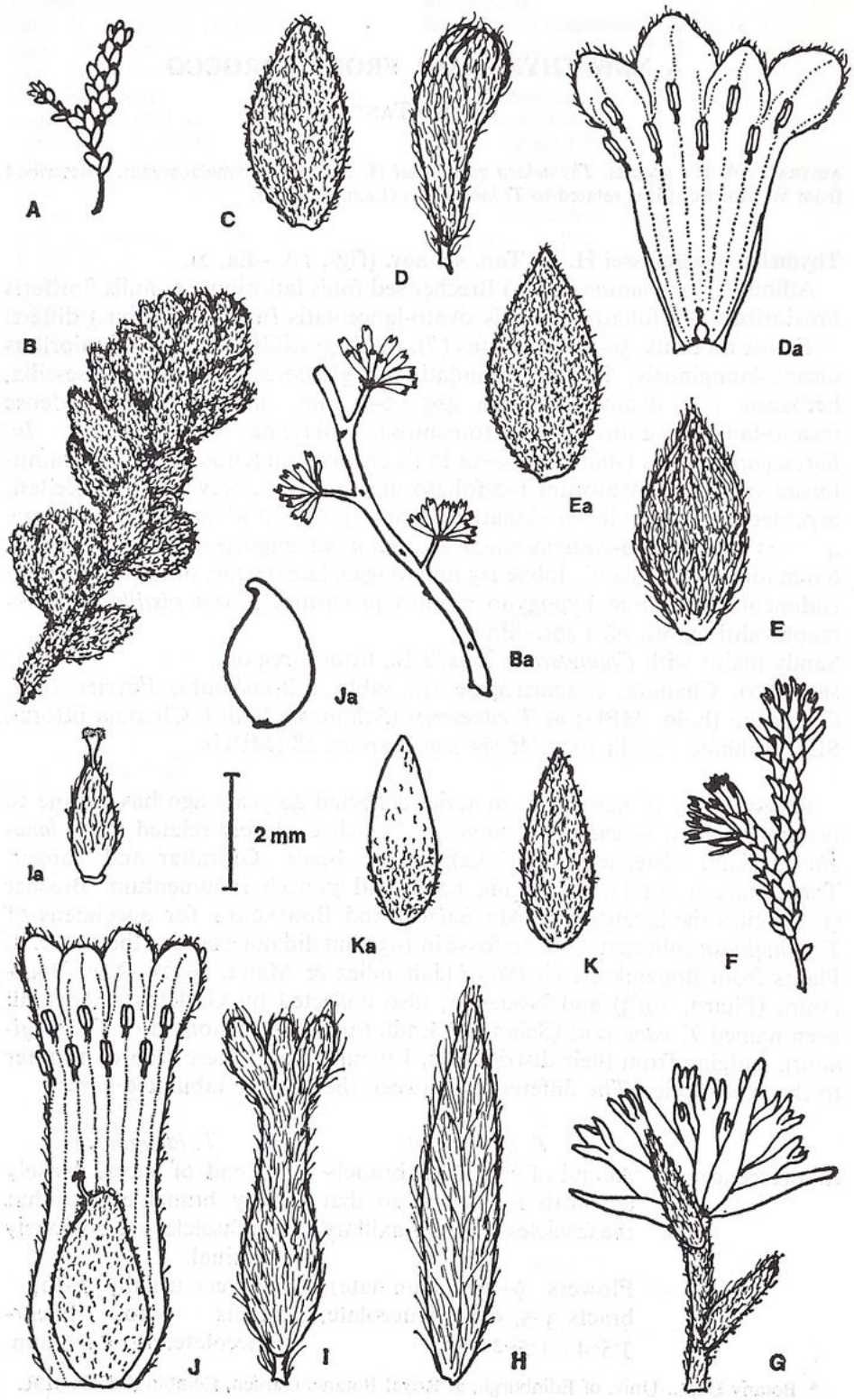
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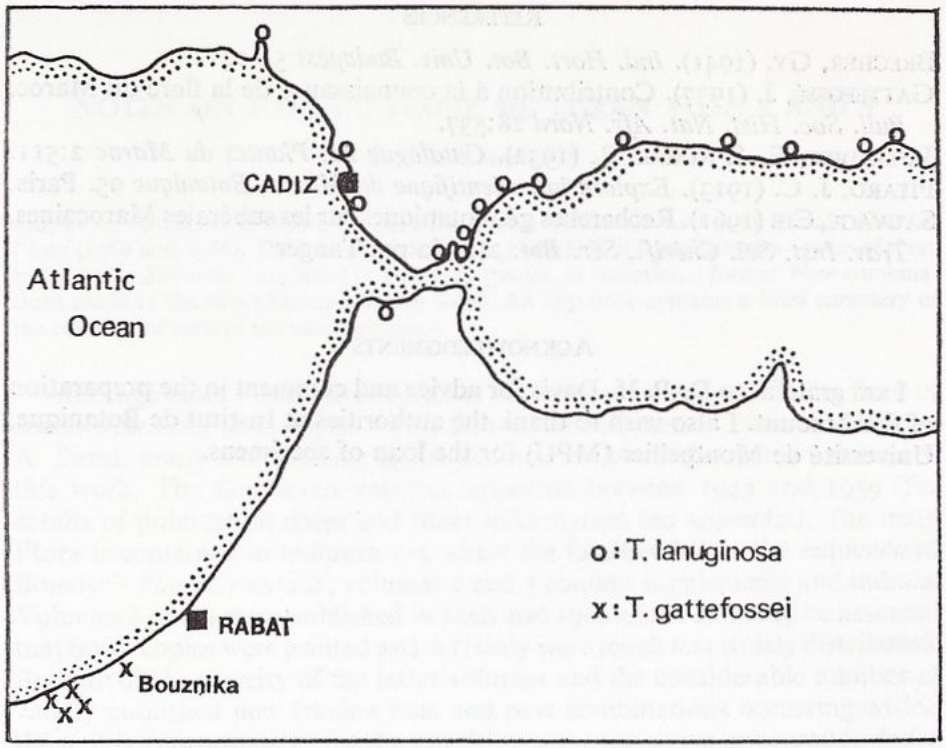


FIG. 2. The total distribution of *Thymelaea lanuginosa* (based on checked herbarium specimens) and *T. gattefossei*.

| | *T. gattefossei* | *T. lanuginosa* |
|---|---|---|
| Sex distribution (on separate plants) | Staminate or pistillate. | Hermaphrodite or pistillate, rarely staminate. |
| Perianth | Narrowly infundibuliform, 6 mm (staminate) | Tubular, 7–8·5 mm (hermaphrodite), 5·5–6 mm (pistillate) |
| Leaf | 4–5 × 2–3 mm | 2–4 × 1·5–2 mm |

The distribution of the new species is apparently restricted to W Morocco, being known only from gatherings near the type locality. According to Sauvage (1961), the flora of the geographical sector of Chaouïa and Rabat has more affinity with the Lusitanian than the Iberian flora, with the existence of many interesting endemic species.

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FIG. 1. A-Ea, *Thymelaea gattefossei* H. K. Tan: A, flowering shoot (× $\frac{2}{3}$); B, part of flowering shoot, enlarged (× 3·5); Ba, leaves and bracts removed to show inflorescences (× 3·5); C, bract (adaxial surface); D, flower bud; Da, dissected staminate flower; E, leaf (adaxial surface); Ea, leaf (abaxial surface). F-Ka, *Thymelaea lanuginosa* (Lam.) Brecher: F, flowering shoot (× 1·5); G, terminal inflorescence with subtending bracts (× 2); H, bract (abaxial surface); I, immature hermaphrodite flower; Ia, immature ovary; J, dissected hermaphrodite flower; Ja, seed; K, leaf (adaxial surface); Ka, leaf (abaxial surface) All drawn to scale shown (× 7) except when indicated.

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