

A new species of *Basananthe* (Passifloraceae) from Somalia ***

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Riassunto

Viene descritta una nuova specie di *Basananthe* (Passifloraceae), *B. merolae*, della Somalia. Si tratta di un suffrutice rampicante della boscaglia ad *Acacia* sp. pl., di cui è stata accertata la presenza in tre contigue stazioni nel distretto di Mogadiscio .

The genus *Basananthe* Peyr. is distributed in Central, East and South Africa. It has been revised a few years ago by DE WILDE (1973), who attributes to it 25 species. More recently (1975), the same author — for the Flora of Tropical East Africa — considers 10 species, 5 of which are endemic of the FTEA area. According to this author, only two species are present in Somalia (1): *B. berberoides* (Chiov.) de Wilde, distributed in N. Somalia and SE. Ethiopia, and *B. hanningtoniana* (Mast.) de Wilde, widespread in E. Tropical and S. Central Africa from Sudan to Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Key Words: *Passifloraceae*, *Basananthe*, *B. merolae* sp. nov., Flora of Somalia.

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(1) The genus *Basananthe* is not mentioned by CUFODONTIS (1959) in his « Enu-meratio ». Only *B. berberoides* is cited (p. 601), but as *Carania berberoides* Chiov., with the note « Genus Passifloracearum incertae sedis ».

A rich population of a species of *Basananthe*, with intermediate characters between the two mentioned species, has been recently found by one of us (FMR) in South-Central Somalia, in Banaadir district, near Mogadishu. The first observations were made in 1976; new informations have been added during other surveys made in 1977 and 1982. A careful examination made in the herbaria of K, PAL and FT has shown that these specimens belong to a new species, as DE WILDE has recently confirmed (in litteris).

The species is named in honour of the late prof. Aldo MEROLA, former director of the Botanic Garden of Naples University, who devoted all his life with great vigour and passion to the problems of Italian Botanic Gardens and particularly to the Botanic Garden of Naples, by him greatly increased in collections through his numerous and hard expeditions in tropical countries.

***Basananthe merolae* Raimondo et Moggi, species nova**

DIAGNOSIS — Suffrutex scandens vel prostratus, laeviter graveolens, usque ad 5 m longus, inermis, valde ramosus, ramis cylindraceutis, sulcatis. Folia varia, nunc simplicia, rotundata, elliptica vel oblonga, 0,5-2 x 0,5-1,5 cm, nunc trifoliata lobo mediano obovato 1-2 x 0,5-1 cm et lobis lateralibus ellipticis vel obovatis 1-1,5 x 0,5-1 cm; margo foliorum remotis denticulis glandulosis 0,5-1 mm praeditus; apex obtusus vel truncatus; petiolus 0,5-2 cm longus. Inflorescentia pauciflora (1-2); pedunculus 0,5-5 cm longus. Flores glabri; pedicelli 0,7-1,5 cm longi. Hypanthium 3-5 mm latum. Sepala (7-)8-10(-11) mm longa, mucronulata, persistentia. Petala albida, (5-)6-8(-9) mm longa, apice truncato et inaequaliter denticulato. Corona exterior scutellata, 2,5-3,5 mm longa, margine exigue angusto, annulato, pilis diffusis 1-1,5 mm longis atque denticulis purpureis praedito; discus tenuis, exigue concavus; corona interior membranacea, urceolata, 1-1,5 mm longa. Stamina 5; filamenta 3-4 mm longa, antheris 1,5-2,5 mm longis. Ovarium ovatus, trimerus, 1,5-3 mm longum; styli 3, 3,5-5 mm longi, adnati; stigmata subglobosa, minuta. Capsula ovata, 1,5-2 cm longa. Semina (2-)3, reniformia, reticulata, atrata, 9-11 x 7-9 mm.

Species *B. hanningtonianae* et *B. berberoidi* affinis. Differt a *B. hanningtoniana* praecipue habitu suffruticoso, forma et denticulis foliorum, inflorescentia, stylis adnatis. Differt a *B. berberoidi* praecipue habitu, forma foliorum, spinis nullis et cirrhis manifestis.

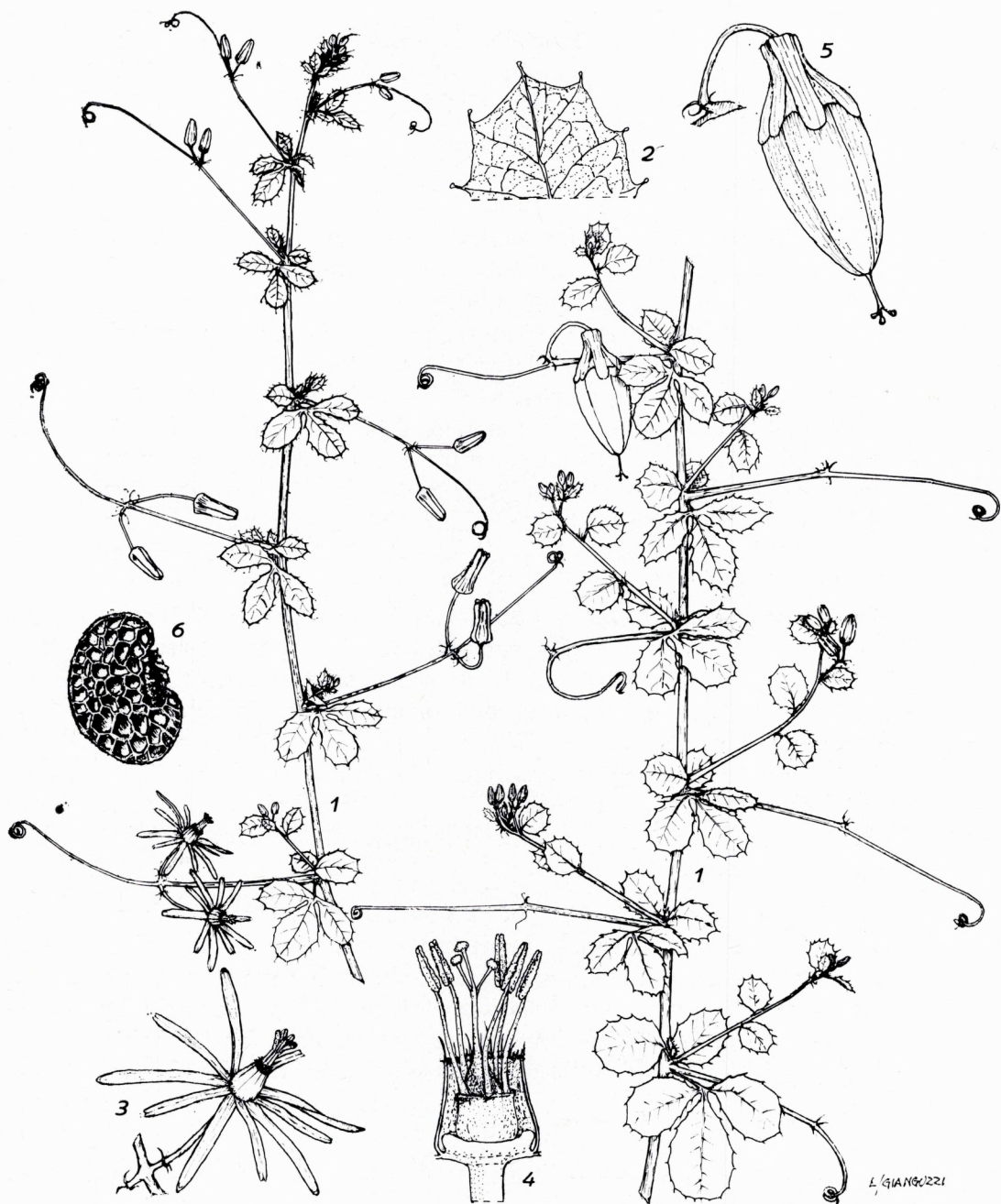


Fig. 1. - *Basananthe merolae*. - 1, habit, x 0,8; 2, upper part of a leaflet showing the typical gland-teeth at the margin, x 2; 3, flower, x 2; 4, the same with sepals and petals removed, x 5; 5, fruit, x 2; 6, seed, x 2,2, all from *Raimondo 17/82* (PAL.). - Drawn by Dr. L. Gianguzzi.

TYPUS: Tra Balad e Mogadiscio. Nella boscaglia ad *Acacia* sp. pl., 16.10.1982, F.M. Raimondo 17/82 (PAL, holotypus). Ibidem, F.M. Raimondo 17/82 (PAL, FT, isotypus).

DESCRIPTION

A climbing or prostrate lightly rank-smelling *suffrutex*, up to 5 m long, unarmed, with numerous intricate subcylindrical branches. *Leaves* either simple, suborbicular, elliptical to oblong, 0,5-2 x 0,5-1,5 cm, or deeply (2-)3-lobate to nearly ternate; central lobe obovate, 1-2 x 0,5-1 cm; lateral lobes elliptical or obovate, 1-1,5 x 0,5-1 cm; margin dentate with remote gland-teeth to 0,5-1 mm; apex obtuse or truncate; petiole 0,5-2 cm. Stipules lesiniform, 1,5-8 mm. *Inflorescence* an axillary cyme with (1-)2 flowers and a terminal tendril 2-5 cm long; peduncle 0,5-5 cm. *Flowers* glabrous; pedicels 0,7-1,5 cm. *Hypanthium* 3-5 mm wide. *Sepals* (7-)8-10(-11) mm, mucronulate, persistent, linear. *Petals* white-yellowish, (5-)6-8(-9) mm; linear, truncate and irregularly denticulate at the apex. *Outer corona-tube* cup-shaped, 2,5-3,5 mm, lightly narrowed at the top; margin provided with sparse appendices 1-1,5 mm long and with a row of shorter purple teeth. *Disk* hollow, slender. *Inner corona* membranous, lightly urceolate, 1-1,5 mm. *Stamens* 5; filaments 3-4 mm; anthers yellow, 1,5-2,5 mm. *Ovary* ovoid, 3-carpellate, 1,5-3 mm; styles 3, 3,5-5 mm long, connate for more than 2/3; stygmas subglobose, small. *Capsule* ovoid, 1,5-2 cm. *Seeds* (2-)3, reniform, reticulate, blackish, 9-11 x 7-9 mm.

A quite distinct species, in some characters closely related to *B. hanningtoniana* and *B. berberoides*. It can be distinguished from *B. hanningtoniana* by its habit, its leaf characters (morphology, teeth, etc.), by the inflorescence and particularly by its connate styles. It differs from *B. berberoides* by its habit, leaf morphology and by the presence of tendrils and the absence of thorns.

DISTRIBUTION AND ECOLOGY

The species grows in the *Acacia*-woodland (« boscaglia ») near the town of Mogadishu. It has been collected in the fol-

lowing localities:

- near the University campus in loc. Dayr, W of Mogadishu, at 7 km on the road to Afgooye (*Raimondo*, PAL).
- 3 km N of Mogadishu on the road to Balcaad (*Raimondo*, PAL, FT).
- Near Balcaad (*Raimondo*, PAL).

In consideration of the distribution of these finding localities, we presume that it is a unique distribution area localised between the Shebelle river and Mogadishu.

B. merolae, according to the observations made in the field, is a woody-climbing member of the thorny woodland described by PIGNATTI and WARFÀ (1983) as *Acacietum tortili-bussei*, which represents the climax vegetation in the coastal part of the old Banaadir region.

The main representative species of this community are: *Acacia tortilis*, *A. spirocarpa*, *A. senegal*, *A. nubica*, *A. benadiensis*, *Parkinsonia raimondoi*, *Dasysphaera breviflora*, *Mundulea sericea*, *Dichrostachys cinerea*, *Delonix elata*, *Cassia longiracemosa*, *Cordyla africana*, *Euphorbia cuneata*, *Uvaria denhardtiana*, *Momordica trifoliata*, *Sansevieria rorida*, *Asystasia gangetica*, *Rhynchosia velutina* s.l., *Cenchrus ciliaris*.

TAXONOMICAL CONSIDERATIONS

B. merolae, by his petals and his corona with a row of threads and a row of inflexed teeth, can be considered a member of Sect. *Basananthe*, according to the subdivision of the genus made by ENGLER (1891).

The subdivision into sections, however, is not accepted by some authors and particularly by DE WILDE (1973), who rejects any classification of such kind because all the proposed criteria appear not sufficiently valid.

ABSTRACT

A new species of *Basananthe*, *B. merolae* (Passifloraceae) is described. The species, which is a woody-climbing of the *Acacia*-woodland, has been found in Somalia, in three different localities near Mogadishu.

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Fig. 2. - *Basananthe merolae* climbing on *Acacia* sp. near Mogadishu at the University campus.