



---

Bechuanaland: A Misunderstood Geographical Name; And the Type Locality of *Haworthia tenuifolia* (Asphodelaceae: Alooideae)

Author(s): Gideon F. Smith, Desmond T. Cole, B-E. van Wyk

Source: *Taxon*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (May, 1993), pp. 369-371

Published by: International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1223146>

Accessed: 13/11/2008 03:43

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=iapt>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).



*International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT)* is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Taxon*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

## Bechuanaland: a misunderstood geographical name; and the type locality of *Haworthia tenuifolia* (*Asphodelaceae: Alooideae*)

Gideon F. Smith<sup>1</sup>, Desmond T. Cole<sup>2</sup> & B-E. van Wyk<sup>3</sup>

### Summary

Smith, G. F., Cole, D. T. & Wyk, B-E. van: Bechuanaland: a misunderstood geographical name; and the type locality of *Haworthia tenuifolia* (*Asphodelaceae: Alooideae*). – *Taxon* 42: 369-371. 1993. – ISSN 0040-0262.

A common misconception about the geographical position of the southern African type locality, “Be(ts)chuanaland”, is clarified. It is shown that this regional name does not necessarily refer to the present-day Republic of Botswana, and that the type specimen of *Haworthia tenuifolia* Engl. was collected in what later became the Cape Province (formerly Cape Colony) of the Republic of South Africa.

### Introduction

When revising the history of the taxonomy of *Chortolirion* A. Berger, one of us (Smith, 1991) erroneously assumed that one of its constituent species, *C. tenuifolium* (Engl.) A. Berger, had been originally described from Botswana. Since this error was based on a widespread misunderstanding, a note on the matter appears to be appropriate. *Haworthia tenuifolia* Engl. (1988), and several other undescribed taxa, were collected by Marloth, the well-known pharmacist and amateur botanist, during a field trip that took place between December (November according to Gunn & Codd, 1981) 1885 and February 1886. Part of the material collected by Marloth was sent for further study and identification to Engler, who was at the time attached to the University of Breslau in Germany, whence he distributed Marloth’s plant material to experts on the families represented. Engler studied the liliaceous taxa himself. The type specimen of *H. tenuifolia*, *Marloth 1049*, still exists in Berlin (B; see Smith, 1991).

Engler (1888) gave the type locality of *Haworthia tenuifolia* as “Betschuanaland, Manjering pr. Kuruman, in arenosis alt. 1200 m”. Hitherto, there has been much confusion about the exact position of this locality, stemming from the indiscriminate substitution of “Botswana” (Republic of Botswana) for “Betschuanaland” (the German spelling), or as it has been more commonly spelt in English, Bechuanaland. This confusion was perpetuated by Wood (1975) and Smith (1991). The political history of the area is complex and is summarized below. The essential point is that “Manjering” (correctly Manyeding; Anonymous, 1972; Leistner & Morris, 1976) has never been within the boundaries of Botswana (formerly Bechuanaland Protectorate).

### The confusion over Bechuanaland

In September 1885, about two months before Marloth collected plant material in the vicinity of Kimberley, where he was a locum pharmacist at the time (Gunn & Codd, 1981), British Bechuanaland was proclaimed a Crown Colony. This colony

<sup>1</sup> National Botanical Institute, Private Bag X101, Pretoria 0001, South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> P.O. Box 447, Lonehill 2062, South Africa.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Botany, Rand Afrikaans University, P.O. Box 524, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa.

included most of the area that lies to the south of the Molopo River, to the east of the Korannaberg and Langberg mountain ranges, to the north of Postmasburg-Barkly West, and west of the Transvaal border (see Fig. 1). In the same year, 1885, Britain proclaimed a protectorate over Bechuanaland north of the Molopo River. The Bechuanaland Protectorate became in 1966 the present-day Republic of Botswana (Sillery, 1970).

The Crown Colony to the south of the Molopo River was annexed to the (British) Cape Colony in 1895, and British Bechuanaland therefore ceased to exist as a separate political entity under that name (Tobias, 1975, 1984). However, the name "Bechuanaland" continued to be used and to appear on maps of the area at least until 1940, and probably until a decade or two later. The Cape Colony in turn became the Cape Province upon the unification of South Africa in 1910. Thus, in 1885 when the type specimen of *Haworthia tenuifolia* was collected, Manyeding was a place in British Bechuanaland, or simply Bechuanaland, which in 1961 became part of the Republic of South Africa.

A further geographical complication is that, since 1977, Manyeding has been placed by the government of the Republic of South Africa within the boundaries of the homeland of Bophuthatswana, not to be confused with the Republic of Botswana.

It is likely that most, if not all, 19th century discoveries of plants in "Bechuanaland" actually took place in British Bechuanaland, i.e. an area in the northern Cape Province, and not in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (= Botswana). Unfortunately the recent indiscriminate substitution of "Botswana" for "Bechuanaland" has given rise

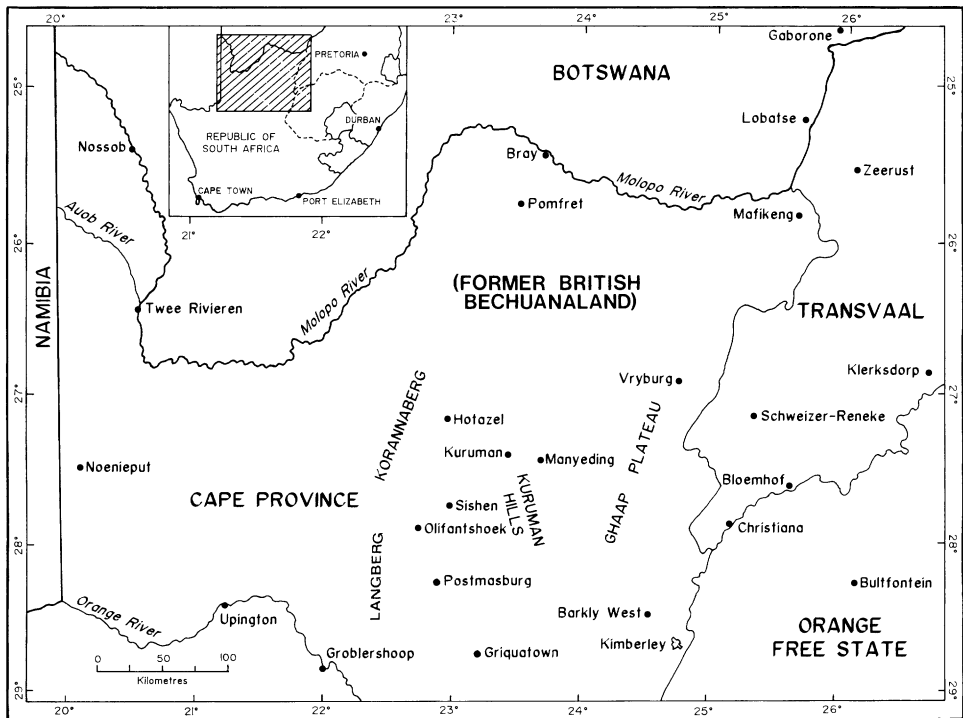


Fig. 1. Geographical location of British Bechuanaland. See text for explanation.

to confusion about localities such as Manyeding, which lies at least 200 km from the nearest boundary of the present Republic of Botswana.

*Literature cited*

- Anonymous, 1972. *Official standard names approved by the United States Board on geographic names. Union of South Africa, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, South West Africa, Swaziland*. Washington.
- Engler, A. 1888. *Plantae Marlothianae*. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Flora Südafrikas. I. Teil: Monokotyledoneae und Dikotyledoneae archichlamydeae. *Bot. Jahrb. Syst.* 10: 1-50, t. 1.
- Gunn, M. D & Codd, L. E. 1981. *Botanical exploration of southern Africa*. Cape Town.
- Leistner, O. A. & Morris, J. W. 1976. Southern African place names. *Ann. Cape Prov. Mus.* 12: 1-565.
- Sillery, A. 1970. Bechuanaland. Pp. 221-236 in: Potgieter, D. J. (ed.), *Standard encyclopaedia of South Africa*, 2. Cape Town.
- Smith, G. F. 1991. Historical review of the taxonomy of *Chortolirion* Berger (*Asphodelaceae: Alooideae*). *Aloe* 28: 90-95.
- Tobias, P. V. 1975. African finds. *Nature* 254: 478.
- 1984. *Dart, Taung and the "missing link"*. [Special publication, Institute for the Study of Man in Africa.] Johannesburg.
- Wood, B. A. 1975. *Australopithecus africanus* fifty years on. *Nature* 253: 578-579.