

Notes

Some new forms of plants from Seychelles

J. Gerlach,

PO Box 207, Victoria, Mahé, SEYCHELLES

Department of Zoology, South Parks Road, Oxford, UK.

Recently several specimens of rare plants have been found, these include several forms that have not been described previously. Descriptions are given below of a new colour form of the saprophytic plant *Seychellaria thomassetii* and the male flowers of *Pisonia sechellarum*.

Pisonia sechellarum Friedmann (Fig. 1.)

The fruit and female flowers of this species have been described (Friedmann 1987). Male flowers were collected by the Oxford University Silhouette Expedition in 1990. The description below is based on a specimen preserved in alcohol in the collection of the Nature Protection Trust of Seychelles (ref. no. P/128/OUSE1). The specimen is illustrated in Fig. 2.

The flower is 6.5mm long, 8.8mm wide apically and 3.8mm wide basally. There are 5 recurved petals, the specimen described has one petal bisected, thus appearing to have 6 petals. All petals have a terminal groove. The terminal 0.5-1.2mm of each petal is hirsute. The 12 stamens extend 2.9mm above the top of the flower, being approximately 9mm long in total. Each anther is composed of two bilobed thecae, each theca measuring 0.4x1.0mm. The pedicel is 7.0mm long. In life the flowers are a pale greenish yellow and the stamens pale yellow; the preserved specimen has become a uniform dark brown.

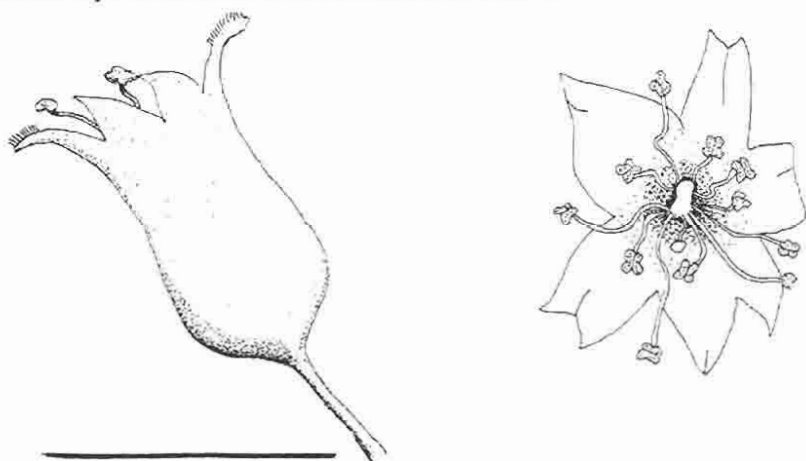


Fig. 1. *Pisonia sechellarum* male flowers - lateral & apical views, scale bar = 5mm

Seychellaria thomassetii Hemsley (Fig. 2.)

Most populations of this species are of the typical purple colour form. Two populations have been found at Coplia on Mahé that are white. These appear to be identical to the normal purple form in all features other than their colouration. They are white on the stem, flowers and fruting bodies. The root system is the typical straw colour of all other populations. The hairs on the fruit are also straw-coloured, becoming purple towards the ends (thus this is not simple albinism). In 1991 the Copolia populations include one colony of some 20m² of the white form with one adjacent purple plant and an isolated single white plant.

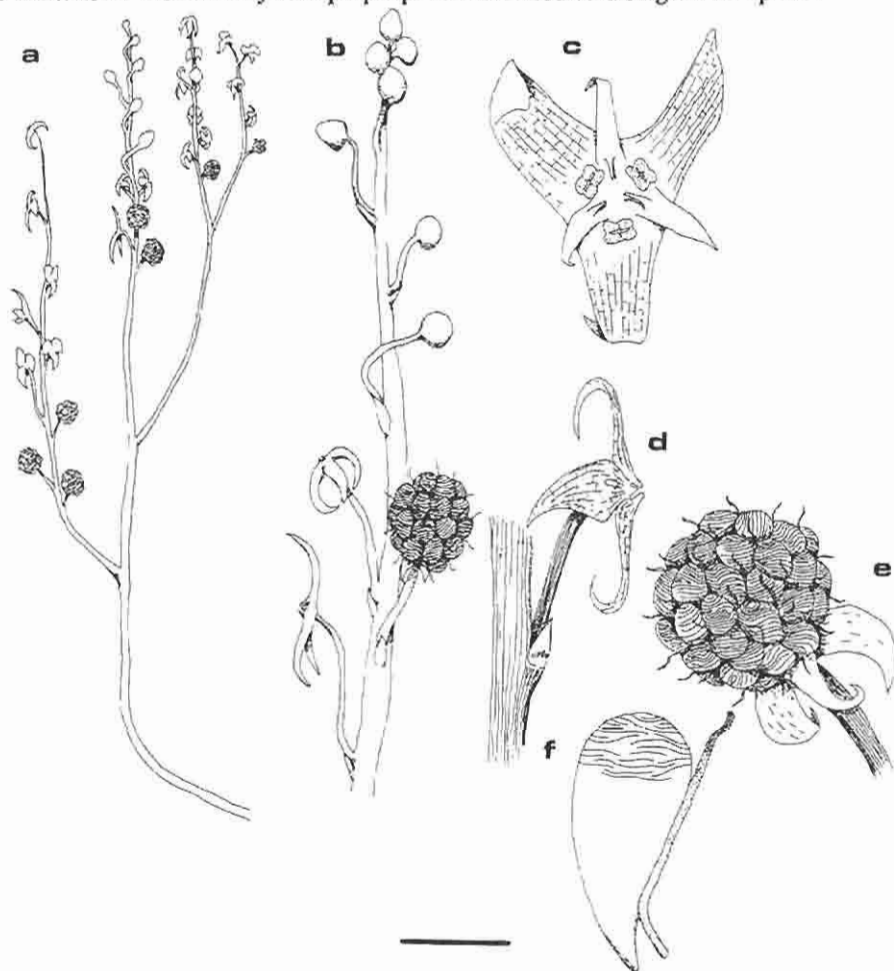


Fig. 2. *Seychellaria thomassetii* white form - a) habit; b) detail; c) & d) flower; e) fruit; f) single segment of fruit

scale bar: a) 10mm; b) 3mm; c) & d) 0.6mm; e) 2mm; f) 0.5mm

References

Friedmann F. 1987

Étude de la structure du périanthe chez des *Pisonia* paléotropicaux et description de *P. sechellarum* sp. nov. (Nyctaginaceae). *Bull. Mus. natn. Hist. Nat., Paris*, 4^e sér., 8, section B, *Adansonia* 4; 383-392

Oxford University Silhouette Expedition 1990

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