

Zeitschrift: Candollea : journal international de botanique systématique = international journal of systematic botany
Herausgeber: Conservatoire et Jardin botaniques de la Ville de Genève
Band: 59 (2004)
Heft: 2

Artikel: Asteriscium novarae Constance & Charpin (Umbelliferae) : a new species from Argentina
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-879331>

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Asteriscium novarae Constance & Charpin (Umbelliferae), a new species from Argentina

ANDRÉ CHARPIN
&
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ABSTRACT

CHARPIN, A. & J.-J. LAZARE (2004). *Asteriscium novarae* Constance & Charpin (Umbelliferae), a new species from Argentina. *Candollea* 59: 255-258. In English, English and French abstracts.

A new species of *Umbelliferae* from Salta Province, Argentina, *Asteriscium novarae* Constance & Charpin, is described and illustrated.

RÉSUMÉ

CHARPIN, A. & J.-J. LAZARE (2004). *Asteriscium novarae* Constance & Charpin (Umbelliferae), une nouvelle espèce d'Argentine. *Candollea* 59: 255-258. En anglais, résumés anglais et français.

Une nouvelle espèce d'ombellifères, *Asteriscium novarae* Constance & Charpin, est décrite de la Province de Salta, Argentine, et illustrée.

KEY-WORDS: UMBELLIFERAE – Asteriscium – Argentina

During the months of December 1993 and January 1994, we spent six weeks in South America. On the 4th of January 2004 we were in Argentina and we travelled from Molinos to Cachi in the morning and then, in the afternoon, from Cachi to Amblayo. We made several stops and collected 47 numbers including a species of *Asteriscium*: *A. glaucum* Hieron. & Wolff (*Charpin & Lazare 23979*), 10 km before Cachi, in a place called Rancagua. At km 42 from Cachi, on road 33, we stopped in an open and low vegetative structure, typical of «la prepuna», and developed on the roadsides on more or less rocky glaucis. This stop provided *Salvia gilliesii* Benth., *Cajophora coronata* (Arn.) Hook. & Arn. (a nitrophytic species related to the presence of *Camelidae*) and *Bougainvillea spinosa* (Cav) Heimerl. Two pteridophytes growing on rocks were also found: *Notholaena nivea* var. *tenera* (Hook.) Griseb. and *Pellea ternifolia* (Cav.) Link, this latter growing on rocky escarpments on the left roadside. Jean Jacques Lazare was the first to see a small *Umbelliferae* which was growing on bare soil near the road, a population of only a few plants. We collected it under the number *Charpin & Lazare 23992*.

Some months later, we sent part of this material to Prof. Lincoln Constance, the Nestor of the family *Umbelliferae*. In a kind letter dated October 21, 1994, he wrote:

«... the most interesting item... was your own n° 23992. It is clearly an *Asteriscium* and more like to *A. famatinense* than any other described species of the genus. But if you compare it with the line-drawing in the Mathias and Constance revision of that genus [MATHIAS &

CONSTANCE, 1962], you will note that striking differences are apparent – habit, leaf shape, etc. I am cautious of coming to sweeping conclusions on the basis of a single plant, and it is possible that under drought conditions some of these morphological characters might be modified. However, I do not think so, and I suspect that you have a real novelty...».

In a second letter (March 27, 1995) he noted:

«... I have looked seriously at your *Asteriscium* specimens from Salta, Argentina, and have concluded that it is, indeed, an undescribed taxon...».

The last letter received from Lincoln was written on the 16th of February 1986, exactly the date of his 87th birthday. He wrote the following words:

«Linda Vorobik, the free-lance artist, promises to be in Berkeley ... before the end of the month. I am expecting that she will bring with her a drawing of our *Asteriscium*. If she does, I shall do my best to complete that project speedily».

During the next five years, till his death (June 11, 2001) we received no news of Prof. Constance. It is only recently (July 2004) that, thanks to the efforts of our friend Jean Pierre Reduron, also a specialist of *Umbelliferae*, and of Bruce Baldwin, curator of the Jepson herbarium and his colleagues at UC, we received an original description in English and a very beautiful plate of the new taxon made by artist Linda Vorobik. We are particularly happy about the opportunity to publish the description of this new Argentinian species.

Asteriscium novarae Constance & Charpin, **spec. nova** (Table 1)

Typus: ARGENTINA, Prov. Salta, Dpto Cachi, Ruta 33, 42 km de Cachi, ca 2930 m, 4.I.1994, A. Charpin & J. J. Lazare 23992 (holo-: UC; iso-: G, GABAS, MCNS).

Ab A. fataminense Hieron. & Wolff differt habitu nano, patulo, basi lignoso, caulibus aphyllis et foliis basi cuneatis.

«Low, dwarfed, spreading herb 5-10 cm tall, from a stout branched woody caudex apparently from a vertical taproot, and emitting 2-several spreading leafless [or nearly so] branches 5-9 cm long, subterete and obscurely striate.

Leaves subcoriaceous, orbicular- to spatulate-cuneate, 5-15 mm in diameter, plane, callous-margined, coarsely acutely dentate, the (3-)5-9 teeth triangular, mucronate, cuneate at base into a slender petiole 1.5-3.5 cm long, abruptly and shortly dilatated at base, cauline leaves lacking [sometimes 1 ?].

Peduncles spreading or ascending, 1.5-2 cm long, in a terminal umbellate cluster of 2 or 3 (-6), or one umbel in the center of each umbellet sessile [in at least one instance, an additional whorl of 3 peduncles beneath the terminal one], each cluster subtended by 1 or more small scarious lanceolate to ovate bracts.

Umbels compact, 8-10 mm in diameter, with usually 5-12 flowers, all perfect (?), the involucre bracts 2-5, lanceolate to ovate, acute, 1-2 mm long [sometimes 1-toothed], a little connate at base. Flowers pink (?); calyx lobes ovate, acute, ca 0.3 mm long; petals ovate, about 0.8-1.0 mm long, the inflexed apex $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ as long, slightly stipitate; filaments ca 0.8-1.0 mm long, the anthers orbicular, ca 0.5 mm in diameter; styles ca 1 mm long, spreading, the stylopodium low conical, its breadth a little greater than length of styles; pedicels 1-2 mm long, spreading. Fruit oblong-cuneate, 2-3.5 mm long, the dorsal ribs evident, the dorsal surface concave.» (Description by Lincoln Constance).

This species is named in honour of Ing. Lazaro J. Novara, professor of botany at Salta University, the best connoisseur of the flora of this Province.

Some years later (January 21, 1999), one of us (AC) returned to the locus classicus. Alas the road had been enlarged and at the very place where we had collected the plant five years before, and he found only a deposit of big blocks. Our friend Ing. Lazaro Novara was also unsuccessful in his attempt to find other specimens during two further visits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our warmest thanks go to Jean Pierre Reduron, to Bruce Balwin who during many months tried and finally succeeded in localising the papers of the late Prof. Lincoln Constance, to the artist Linda Vorobik for her beautiful drawings and to our colleague, Adélaïde Stork who checked the English of this paper.

REFERENCE

MATHIAS, M. E. & L. CONSTANCE (1962). A revision of *Asteriscium* and some related hydrocotyloid Umbelliferae. *Univ. Calif. Publ. Bot.* 33: 99-184.

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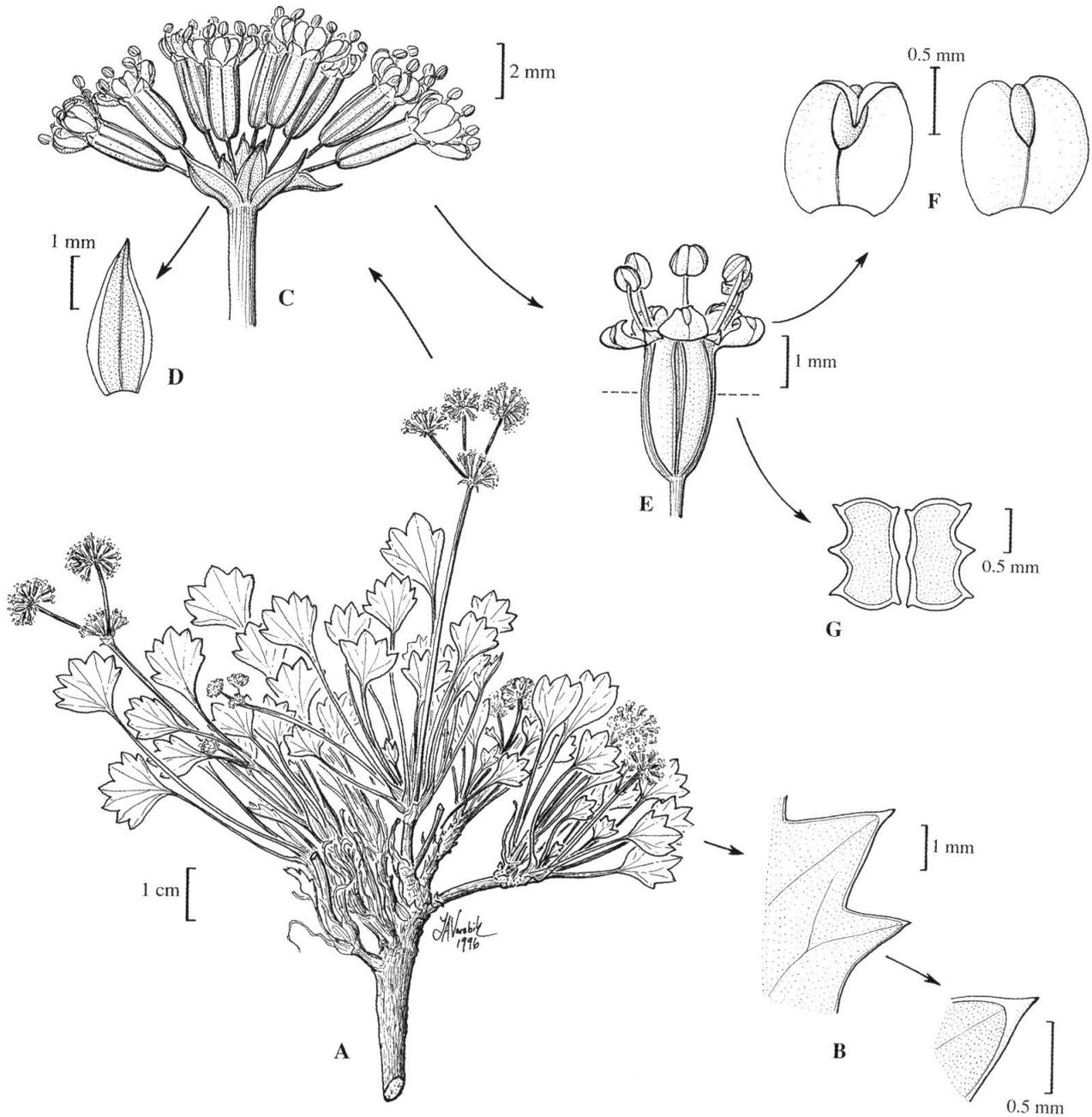


Table 1. – *Asteriscium novarae* Constance & Charpin. **A.** Habit; **B.** Details of a leaf; **C.** Umbel; **D.** Bractlet; **E.** Flower; **F.** Petal; **G.** Fruit.

[Charpin & Lazare 23992]

[Drawing Linda Vorobik]