

PIMELEA ELONGATA (THYMELAEACEAE) A NEW SPECIES FROM INLAND AUSTRALIA

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ABSTRACT

Threlfall, Susan (John Ray Herbarium, University of Sydney, Australia, 2006) 1980. *Pimelea elongata* (Thymelaeaceae) A new species from inland Australia. *Telopea* 2 (1): 55–56.—*Pimelea elongata* Threlfall, sp. nov. occurs in inland areas of eastern central Australia and has some significance as a stock poison in some areas. It has been referred to as *P. trichostachya* Lindl. form “B” by Everist (1974), ‘Poisonous Plants of Australia’.

INTRODUCTION

I have prepared a revision of the eastern Australian species of *Pimelea* as part of the requirement for a Ph. D. degree at the University of Sydney. I hope to publish this but in the mean time a name is required for one of the undescribed species occurring in the area of the proposed Central Australian Flora. This contribution supplies that name.

Pimelea elongata Threlfall, sp. nov.

Planta gracilis erecta ad 50 cm alta caulibus fuscis. Folia alterna, flavo-viridia, lineari-elliptica. Flores in spicis interruptis disposita sine involucre. Perianthium flavo-viride pilis brevis antrorsis vel antrorso-appressis instructum.

HOLOTYPE: Tributary of Beechel Creek, 3 miles (5 km) NW. of Cheepie, Queensland, Clark, 22.7.1970 (BRI 100000).

Slender erect plant up to 0.5 m high, mainly herbaceous but woody at the base. Stems yellow-brown, bearing scattered hairs which become fewer with age. Leaves alternate, yellow-green, sometimes blue-green when dry, linear-elliptic, 3–15 mm long, 0.8–2.5 mm wide, acute, glabrous or bearing scattered hairs on both surfaces, with the midrib not prominent, concave, convex or flat; petiole 0.5–1.0 mm long. Spikes terminal; peduncle up to 16 mm long at maturity, covered with scattered hairs. Involucre absent, but a pair of stem leaves close under the inflorescence in the bud. Spikes condensed when young but elongating to up to 15 cm at maturity, interrupted; rachis more densely hairy than the stem. Flowers bisexual. Pedicels 0.5–1.5 mm long, covered with scattered patent hairs. Perianth yellow-green, 3.5–5.0 mm long, glabrous inside, densely covered outside with short antrorse hairs which become appressed on the lobes; tube 2.8–4.0 mm long, constricted at the neck, circumscissile above the ovary after flowering; lobes elliptical, 0.5–1.0 mm long, 0.3–0.8 mm wide, obtuse, glabrous, towards the margins on the outer surface. Stamens inserted in the mouth of the tube and exceeding it; filaments shorter than the perianth lobes, 0.1–0.2 mm long; anther cells oblong, 0.3–0.8 mm long, up to 0.3 mm wide, usually on a narrow connective and back to back when dehiscent but sometimes on a broad connective and parallel and introrse. Ovary depressed-ovoid, 1–2 mm long, 0.5–0.8 mm wide, glabrous except for a tuft of hairs at the apex, sessile; style 1 mm long; stigma papillose. Mature fruit green, glabrous except for a few hairs at the apex, ovoid, 2.5–3.0 mm long, 0.8–1.0 mm wide, enclosed in the persistent base of the perianth. Seed ovoid or slightly pear-shaped, 2.5–3.0 mm long, 0.8–1.0 mm wide, glabrous, black, foveate with the pits in rows.

DISTRIBUTION: Western New South Wales, south western Queensland, north eastern South Australia and southern Northern Territory.

HABITAT: On heavy textured soils with a thin sandy upper layer.

SPECIMENS EXAMINED: QUEENSLAND: "Springfield", Windorah, 5 miles [8 km] W. of Thylungra Homestead, Stranger, 28.8.1959 (BRI 019515); Munberry, Cheepie, Clark, 18.2.1971 (BRI 109463); 104 miles [166 km] from Charleville on Quilpie Road, Everist, 1.9.1963 (BRI 062038); Warrego District near Toompie, Everist, 20.4.1968 (BRI 158130).

NEW SOUTH WALES: Walgett, Guilfoyle, 30.5.1901 (MEL); Bourke, Hatten, 4.1900 (NSW 128570).

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Arcoona Creek (Mt Searle to Yankannina Road, 60 km E. of Leigh Creek), Rohrlach, 10.10.1959 (AD 96046059); Chambers Gorge (60 km ENE. of Blinman), Eichler 12573, 12.9.1956 (NSW).

This species is discussed in Everist (1974: 495) as *P. trichostachya* Lindl. 'Form B'.

P. elongata belongs to a group of species in which the individuals are relatively short-lived with small yellowish flowers. The group as a whole occurs in the drier inland parts of eastern-central Australia, often in fairly large stands. They are all poisonous to stock and are sometimes difficult to distinguish.

Key to *Pimelea elongata* and related species

- A. Spikes dense and uninterrupted, usually elongating up to 2.5 cm in fruiting stage.
 - B. Pedicel hairs 1–1.5 mm long. Perianth with short antrorse hairs. Stems reddish at the base. Peduncle up to 17 mm long. Spikes condensed or elongated at maturity. *P. simplex* F. Muell.
 - B.* Pedicel hairs short (0.3–0.6 mm long). Perianth with fine patent hairs which become coarser and appressed on the lobes. Peduncle up to 35 mm long. Spikes elongated at maturity. *P. continua* J. M. Black
- A.* Spikes interrupted, elongating to over 10 cm in fruiting stage.
 - C. Perianth-tube with short antrorse hairs *P. elongata* Threlfall
 - C.* Perianth-tube with long patent hairs *P. trichostachya* Lindl.

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REFERENCE

Everist, S. L. (1974). 'Poisonous Plants of Australia.' (Angus & Robertson: Sydney.)

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