

### 3. CENTROLEPIS, Labill.

(*Desvauxia* and *Alepyrum*, R. Br.)

CETROLEPIDACEAE

Flowers hermaphrodite, several together or rarely solitary, sessile within 2 sheathing bracts, each one within 1, 2 or 3 hyaline scarious scales rarely entirely deficient. Stamen 1, filament filiform; anther oblong-linear, dorsally attached. Ovary of 3 or more carpels (rarely reduced to 2 or 1) laterally adnate and superposed in 2 rows to one side of a linear receptacle, each with 1 pendulous ovule; styles 1 to each carpel, all distinct or more or less united at the base, all undivided and ending in a linear-filiform stigma. Fruiting carpels slightly enlarged from the ovary and of the same shape; pericarp membranous, opening outwards in a longitudinal slit. Seed of the shape of the carpel and often laterally adnate to the pericarp; testa appressed; embryo small, obovoid or almost lenticular, in a mealy albumen, distant from the hilum.—Small tufted plants mostly annuals. Leaves linear-filiform, all radical. Scapes simple, terminating in the 2 bracts either close together or one a little distant from the other, both flowering or the lower one empty.

The genus is limited to Australia with the exception of one species, closely allied to an Australian one, recently found by Hance in South China.

Spikes narrow, containing 1 to 4 flowers, the outer bracts erect and glabrous, inner scales few and narrow or none.

Flowers 1 or very rarely 2 in the spike. Leaves 3 or 4 lines long.

Scape shorter than the almost sessile spike . . . 1. *C. humillima*.

Scape usually 1 in. long or more. Outer bract aristate . . . 2. *C. polygyna*.

Flowers 2 to 4 in the spike.

Scape 1 to 3 in. Outer bract with a long slender awn. An inner scale to each flower. Carpels 3, rarely 2 or 1. . . . 3. *C. alepyroides*.

Scape under 1 in. Outer bract with a long awn. Inner scales very prominent . . . 10. *C. aristata*, var.

Scape about 1 in. Leaves very short. Outer bracts scarcely pointed. No inner scales. . . 4. *C. mutica*.

Scape under 1 in. Leaves nearly as long. Outer bracts with a short awn. No inner scales. Carpels 6 to 10. . . 5. *C. glabra*.

Scape and leaves about  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. Outer bracts with a short awn. About 2 inner scales. Carpels 6 to 10. . . 6. *C. muscoides*.

Scape and leaves under  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. Outer bracts scarcely acuminate. An inner scale. Carpel 1. . . 7. *C. monogyna*.

Spikes ovate or broad, containing more than 4 flowers, the outer bracts glabrous or rarely with a few hairs erect or spreading, and 1, 2 or 3 scales under each flower, usually very prominent.

Leaves and scapes  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. Flowers 4 to 6 in the spike.

Carpels usually fewer than 6. Southern plant. . . 8. *C. pulvinata*.

Carpels usually more than 6. Tropical plant. . . 9. *C. pusilla*.

Scapes usually 1 to 2 in. Flowers 4 or more in each outer bract.

Outer bracts with long leafy points. Carpels usually 3 to 6. Southern and western species . . . 10. *C. aristata*.

Outer bracts shortly acuminate. Carpels usually 4 to 6. Southern and western species . . . 11. *C. Drummondii*.

Outer bracts scarcely pointed. Flowers numerous. Carpels 10 to 20. Tropical species . . . 12. *C. Banksii*.

Spikes usually ovate or broad, the outer bracts hispid with long spreading hairs. Inner scales prominent. Outer bracts scarcely spreading with awns usually longer than the bract.

Carpels usually 3. Styles free or nearly so. . . 13. *C. fascicularis*.

Carpels 6 or more. Styles united to above the middle. . . 14. *C. pilosa*.

Outer bracts spreading with short points.

Carpels about 6. Extratropical species . . . 15. *C. strigosa*.

Carpels more than 6. Flowers very numerous.

Tropical species . . . 16. *C. exserta*.

Hieronymus, Centrol. 103, retains the name of *Alepyrum* for the New Zealand *A. pallidum*, Hook. f., which I think Hooker had more correctly at first published as a *Gaimardia* of which it has the characteristic habit, and from which it only differs in having 1 instead of 2 stamens. Hieronymus also attributes to it the superposed carpels of *Centrolepis* which I do not find, the ovary is not lobed but 2- to 4-celled with 2 to 4 styles. The capsule in *G. australis* opens loculicidally in 2 valves; in *G. pallida* I found it 1-celled and 1-seeded by abortion.

12. **C. Banksii**, *Ræm. et Schult. Syst. i. 44.*—Very similar to *C. exserta*, but quite glabrous in all its parts. Leaves filiform mostly about  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. long, and scapes from that to 1 in. or rather more. Spike broad, the floral bracts very spreading, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lines long, ovate, acute or tapering into a short point. Flowers numerous in both bracts, the hyaline scales usually 2 to each flower and often as long as the outer bract. Carpels of the ovary from 10 to 20.—Hieron. Centrol. 99; *Desvauxia Banksii*, R. Br. Prod. 253.

**N. Australia.** Victoria River, *F. Mueller.*  
**Queensland.** Endeavour River, *Banks and Solander.*

16. **C. exserta**, *Ræm. et Schult. Syst. i. 44.*—Leaves shortly hairy, under 1 in. long. Scapes slender, pubescent or glabrous, 1 to 3 in. high. Floral bracts placed near together, very spreading, ovate-lanceolate, shortly awned or mucronate, hispid, about 2 lines long. Flowers numerous in each bract; hyaline scales usually 2 to each flower, nearly as long as the outer bract, often jagged at the end, and sometimes a third small one. Carpels of the ovary 6 to 10; styles very shortly connate.—Hieron. Centrol. 101; *Desvauxia exserta*, R. Br. Prod. 253; Guillem. Ic. Pl. Austral. t. 17.

**N. Australia.** Providence Hill and M'Adam Range, *F. Mueller.*

**Queensland.** Endeavour River, *Banks and Solander*; the same coast but particular station forgotten, *R. Brown*; North Queensland, *Armit.* *C. cambodiana*, Hance, from South China differs from this species chiefly in the larger size of all its parts.