



Nomenclatural notes on Macaronesian *Micromeria* (Lamiaceae)

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Recently, the authors presented a proposal to conserve the names *Micromeria varia* Bentham (1834: 374) with a conserved type and *M. hyssopifolia* Webb & Berthelot (1844: 72) against *Thymus ericifolius* Roth (1800: 50) (Puppo *et al.* 2014a) to avoid disruption of current usage of these two well established names. This proposal, however, was not recommended by the *Nomenclature Committee* (Applequist 2016) and subsequently turned down by the *General Committee* (Wilson 2017). While regretting this decision, we are prepared to accept the taxonomic and nomenclatural implications.

key words: Priority, typification, illegitimate name, taxonomic confusion, Tenerife.

The taxon hitherto known as *M. varia* was considered to occur in the archipelagos of Madeira and Canary Islands by Pérez de Paz (1978), but in its current circumscription is restricted to Tenerife (Puppo & Meimberg 2015). *Micromeria varia* was described by Bentham (1834) based on two specimens preserved at K (barcodes K000193457 and K000193466) and mounted on one sheet together with two further specimens added later and collected by Webb in 1839 (barcode K000193465). The specimen on the left hand side of the sheet (barcode K000193457) is labelled “*Thymus inodorus* non Desf.” and cannot be identified with certainty, but may be a hybrid. The individual on the right hand side of the sheet (barcode K000193466) is labelled “Herb. Soc. Hort. Lond. *Micromeria varia* Benth. Lab. 374 Ins. Tenerifa.” and has been considered to represent “typical” *M. varia*. According to the protologue and the original material seen, Bentham clearly intended to describe the plants from Tenerife.

The name *M. varia* Benth., however, is illegitimate, because the legitimate name *Thymus ericifolius* Roth is cited as a synonym (Art. 52.1 of the ICN, McNeill *et al.* 2012). The type of *T. ericifolius* was lost during WW-II and a neotype was designated by Bräuchler in Puppo *et al.* (2014a). This specimen, however, belongs to *M. hyssopifolia* and not to “*M. varia*” from Tenerife. Thus, *M. ericifolia* (Roth) Bornmüller (1924: 198) becomes the oldest available name for the plants traditionally known as *M. hyssopifolia* (see Puppo *et al.* 2014a).

The *Nomenclature Committee* suggests to use the name *M. thymoides* (Solander ex Lowe 1831: 19) Webb & Berthelot (1844: 71) for the Tenerife plants traditionally identified as *M. varia* (Applequist 2016). However, as defined by the lectotype designated by Bräuchler in Puppo & Meimberg (2015), that name is associated with the taxon occurring on Madeira which recently has been revealed as specifically distinct from the plants on Tenerife (Puppo *et al.* 2014b, 2015). Furthermore, the name *M. thymoides* (Sol. ex Lowe) Webb & Berthel. is threatened by the most likely priority of *M. thymoides* De Notaris (1844: 353), currently placed in synonymy to *M. graeca* Bentham (1834: 373) subsp. *imperica* Chater (1971: 381) (Bräuchler *et al.* 2008). The oldest name available for “*M. varia*” from Tenerife is *M. tragothymus* Webb & Berthelot (1844: 73), that was included in the synonymy of *M. varia* by Pérez de Paz (1978) and has not been used since the times of Webb & Berthelot (1844).

Taxonomic treatment

Micromeria ericifolia (Roth) Bornmüller (1924: 198) ≡ *Thymus ericifolius* Roth (1800: 50) (‘ericaefolius’)

Neotype (designated by Bräuchler in Puppo *et al.* 2014a: 1137):—SPAIN. [Canary Islands]: “Habitat in Hispania” [on folder B-W 11017-000], “Hort. bot. Berol. W.” (B-W barcode 11017-010; image of the neotype is available at <http://herbarium.bgbm.org/object/BW11017010>).

≡ *Micromeria varia* Bentham (1834: 374), *nom. illeg.*

= *Micromeria hyssopifolia* Webb & Berthelot (1844: 72). Lectotype (designated by Pérez de Paz 1978: 209):—SPAIN. Canary Islands: “*Thymus polymorpha* sp. n.?, in rupestribus siccis Ins. Canar. vulgatissima”, Barker-Webb (FI, upper left-hand specimen).

Micromeria tragothymus Webb & Berthelot (1844: 73)

Lectotype (designated here by Pérez de Paz):—SPAIN. Canary Islands: “In montosis Teneriffae”, Baker-Webb (FI barcode FI011053 [digital photo!], upper left-hand specimen; image of the lectotype is available at http://parlatore.msn.unifi.it/types_new/search.php).

—*Micromeria varia* auct.

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