

## **Echeveria crenulata Rose, 1911 - questioned**

In 1911 J. N. Rose described a plant he himself and J. H. Painter had collected 8 years ago, in 1903, near Cuernavaca, Morelos, as *Echeveria crenulata* – as follows :

### **Stem :**

Caulescent, the stem in cultivated specimens short but in wild specimens much elongated and enlarged.

### **Leaves :**

Basal leaves in the wild plant broadly obovate, more than 30 cm long, 15 cm broad, rounded at apex, tapering at base into a very distinct petiole; pale green, a little glaucous, the margin wavy and purplish red.

### **Inflorescence :**

Bracts acute, ovate to spatulate, tapering into a stout, thick petiole; inflorescence a short panicle, the lateral branches short, few-flowered, the bract instead of subtending the branch usually carried up for some distance on the peduncle.

### **Flowers :**

Sepals widely spreading, very unequal, acute, corolla 15 mm long, strongly angled, yellowish red, petals acute.

With a rosette diameter of 60 cm or more this must have been a giant plant !

Later Eric Walther wrote his own description of *E. crenulata* from a plant collected in 1934 (or 1935 according to his article in CSJ US, vol. 7 (9), 137-139), occurring “along banks and stream sides, and on ruined walls at Cuernavaca” (Echeveria, 1972, p. 196-197) :

### **Stem :**

To over 10 cm tall, sometimes budding from near base.

### **Leaves :**

Rather few, rhomboid-obovate, to over 10 cm long, 7 cm broad or more, strongly mucronate to acute, narrowed to width of 2 cm at base, margins flat, or strongly and finely undulate, scarcely crenulate, not at all glaucous.

Colour: Elm-green tinged fawn-colour, edged dark vinaceous-brown, at most only very slightly glaucous.

**Inflorescence :**

One to four, to over 50 cm tall, peduncle stout, erect, bracts numerous, ascending, obovate-cuneate, mucronate to acutish, to 5 cm long, at base narrowed into stout petiole; panicle with nine or more short, secund-racemose branches, each with 4 – 12 flowers, the bracts subtending these branches usually borne some distance above base of branch, pedicels to 10 mm long.

**Flowers :**

Sepals unequal, linear-deltoid to oblanceolate, longest to 10 mm long, acute, widely spreading to recurved, colour purple-drab; corolla urceolate, pentagonal to campanulate above, to 18 mm long, 12 mm in basal diameter, at times to 16 mm wide at mouth, petals bluntly keeled on back.

Colour: Alizarine-pink (pale pink) to ochraceous-buff (salmon), inside Naples-yellow (pale yellow).

With a rosette of only somewhat more than 20 cm in diameter and a much longer inflorescence this is clearly not the same plant as Rose's *E. crenulata* !

Another – though very scarce – description of *E. crenulata* by Marjory Shields, New Zealand, is published together with a black and white photo, in CSJ US, vol. 29 (2), p. 40 + 43, 1957 :

“The large rosette is cup shaped, lime green flushed with pink and with crenulated edges. ... The flower is colourful too, with the calyx as brightly tinted red as the flower itself.”

With cup-shaped leaves and red flowers this is again a different plant and may well have been a hybrid.

Charles Uhl's comment on this species can be found in *Haseltonia* 9, p. 129, 2002 :  
“The type is from a barranca near Cuernavaca in an area where the *Gibbiflorae* vary greatly in form and ploidy, and from where several other species were named. This large-leaved species is intermediate between *E. gibbiflora*, of which the tetraploid ( $n = 54$ ) is common in the area, and *E. fulgens*, which is common just to the west. One or more of the collections that I list under those names might possibly belong with *E. crenulata*, but I question its validity as a species.”

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