

## MUDWORTS IN KENYA

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The genus *Limosella* L. (Scrophulariaceae) or 'Mudwort' as it is called in Britain is very little known in East Africa although several species occur. This short note is intended to draw attention to these interesting plants since in all probability undiscovered species remain to be found and even the commoner ones are very poorly represented in herbaria. All are small aquatic or semi-aquatic herbs with leaves and flowers radical in basal tufts a few inches in diameter. Three species are mentioned in Flora of Tropical Africa IV (ii) p. 352-3 (1906), but none is recorded from Kenya.

## KEY TO THE SPECIES

- A Leaves ovate or elliptic, blades floating abruptly narrowed into fine petioles; rest of plant submerged; flowers sessile:
- Leaves narrowly elliptic ..... 3. *L. africana* Gluck  
 Leaves oval ..... 2. *L. capensis* Thunb.
- AA Leaves oblanceolate or elliptic, blade merged gradually into a long coarse petiole; plant growing on muddy banks; flowers stalked:
- ..... 1. *L. major* Diels
- AAA Leaves linear or subulate ..... 4. *L. macrantha* Fries

## NOTES ON THE SPECIES

1. *Limosella major* Diels. This has been recorded from Eritrea and South Africa. It was recently discovered by P. J. Greenway and C. F. Hemming at the foot of the escarpment on the Naivasha road in a seasonal swamp together with sedges, *Crassula*, etc. in open *Acacia* woodland. The flowers are pale blue and the plant produces runners. The whole plant is rather fleshy. Greenway & Hemming 8768 (E.A. Herb., and Kew).
2. *Limosella capensis* Thunb. This species is known from South and South West Africa. It seems to be frequent in very seasonal ponds and swamps e.g. at Muguga on murrum. Verdcourt 641 (E.A. Herb and Kew) and Elmenteita, Soy Sambu Estate Bogdan 1054 (E.A. Herb. and Kew).
3. *Limosella africana* Gluck. This has been confused under *L. aquatica* Linn. the common European species and is recorded from Abyssinia and the Cameroons Mountains. Mr. Bogdan has collected this species at Elmenteita, in plains round the lake, pools in saline pan with rock bed. Bogdan 3034 (E.A. Herb. and Kew).
4. *Limosella macrantha* Fries. This species has not been seen but was described and figured by its author from plants found in the Aberdares at over 10,000 ft. R.E. & Th. Fries 2691 (Uppsala). The figures may be found in Acta Hort. Bergiani 8, 49 (1925).

Further material from other localities in East Africa is must desired. I have not seen Fries's material from Mt. Kenya which he calls *L. aquatica* Linn.

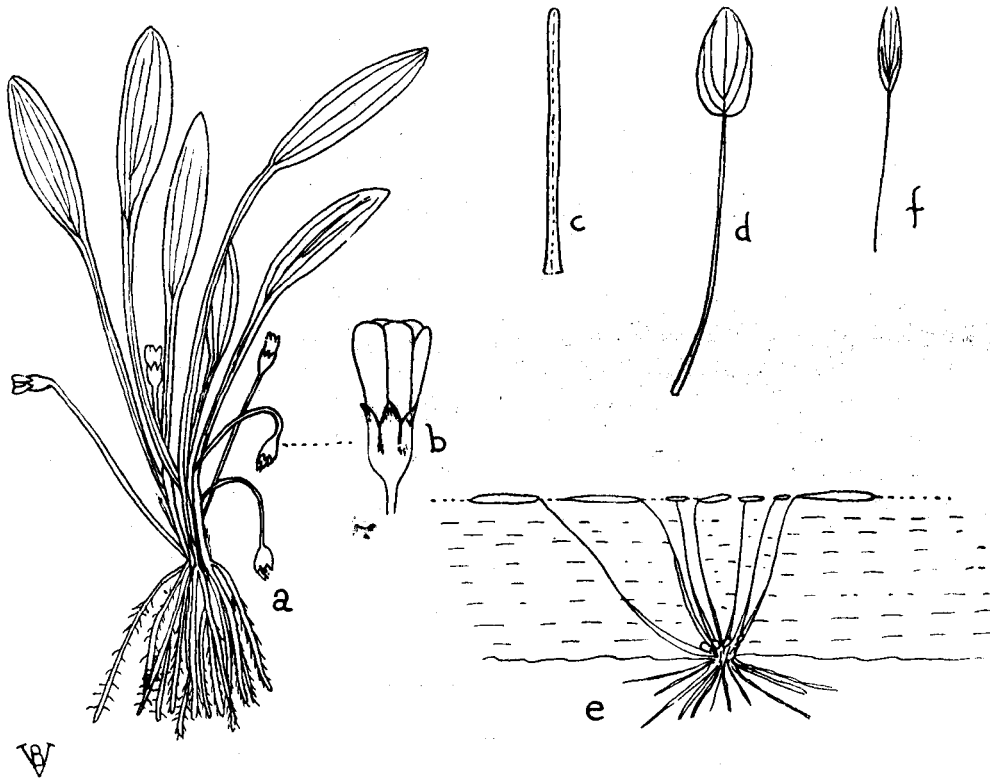


Fig. 1. "Mudworts":—

- (a) Entire plant of *L. major* Diels, x  $\frac{1}{2}$ .
- (b) flower of ditto, x 4.
- (c) leaf of *L. macrantha* R.E., Fr., x  $\frac{1}{2}$ .
- (d) Leaf of *L. capensis*, x  $\frac{1}{2}$ .
- (e) ditto, showing position in water.
- (f) Leaf of *L. africana* Gluck, x  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

#### A RARE HAWK

A juvenile plumaged Ovampo Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter ovampensis* Gurney) has been added recently to the ornithological study collection at the Coryndon Museum. In this plumage the Ovampo Sparrow Hawk is very similar to an adult Rufous Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter rufiventris* Smith) but differs in having buff margins to the feathers of the upperparts and wing coverts and a paler crown.

The donors of this valuable specimen are Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Cockburn of Nairobi. The hawk was secured by a native with a stone as it was standing over a young chicken it had just killed.

The Editor.