

Crassula calcarea N.H.G.Jacobsen
sp. nov.

Diagnosis: Similar to *Crassula quadrifaria* but differs from it in its very small size, not exceeding 20 cm in height when flowering, the dense cluster of very small, pyramidal rosettes, with many short branches in the leaf axils, globular cilia along the leaf margins and in the absence of teeth/cilia on the margins of the calyx lobes.

Description: A succulent biennial to perennial plant with a cluster of very short 1–3-cm tall rosettes reaching a height of 20 cm when flowering in cultivation, but mostly less. Short branches arise from the axils of the leaves and from the base of the plant. *Leaves* 4-ranked, ovate, tightly adpressed initially but opening up upwards with onset of flowering, glabrous, with a row of hydathodes along the leaf margin and on the upper surface, margins with globular cilia (Figure 11). *Inflorescence* a thyrse with 5 or 6 sessile flowers in leaf axils along the stem and branches (Figure 12). *Flowers* shortly tubular, 2.5–3 mm long. *Calyx* extending up to half the length of the flower, joined at the base, lobes lanceolate, acute, glabrous, cilia absent. *Petals* white, pale green basally, erect, oblong, opening out in upper half at maturity but fused basally, each with a casque-like terminal appendage and incurved apex. *Squamae* oblong, entire, cuneate, orange-brown. *Carpels* pyriform, style absent, stigma large, dorsolateral.

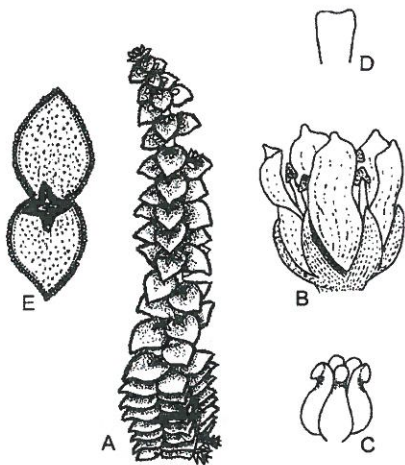


Figure 11. *Crassula calcarea* from the Grassridge area, Port Elizabeth. A. Habit. B. Flower. C. Carpels. D. Nectary. E. Leaf pair and branch showing globular cilia and hydathodes around leaf margin and on surface. Voucher specimen: Jacobsen 6606.



Figure 12. *Crassula calcarea* from the Grassridge area, Port Elizabeth.

Holotype: South Africa, Eastern Cape Prov., Grassridge, Coega, Port Elizabeth (3325DA), Jacobsen 6606 (PRE).

Distribution and habitat: Has only been recorded from a calcrete outcrop in vegetation type AT 7, Coega Bontveld (Mucina & Rutherford 2006), growing in shallow stony soil together with *Acmadenia obtusata*, *Commelina africana* and various mosses in the vicinity of Grassridge. Flowered in cultivation December to March.

Etymology: The name refers to the calcrete habitat of the species.

Comments: Although recorded from only one locality to date, the plant retains its basic appearance in cultivation but branches substantially, each branch forming a thyrse (Figure 12).