Title: Taxonomic revision of Southern Africa Pavonia Cav. (Malvaceae: Malvoideae)
SANBI supervisor: Dr S. Sharma
University co-supervisor: To be decided
University: University of KwaZulu-Natal
Level: Masters

Additional information:
The genus Pavonia Cav. is listed as a high priority genus for taxonomic research in the Strategy for Plant Taxonomic Research of South Africa published in 2015. Pavonia Cav. (also called as ‘Swampmallows’) is probably one the largest genus of family Malvaceae which comprised of approximately 250 species worldwide with 224 species in Americas alone and 130 species in Brazil (Esteves, 2010). The genus Pavonia Cav. is placed within a tribe Malvavisceae under Malvoideae, which is characterized by having twice as many as styles as the number of carpels (Fryxell, 1999). The motivation for the study is to resolve the identification of Pavonia spp. and also to re-describe according to the latest formats of taxonomic descriptions. A study employing both morphology and population genetic analysis to examine these species particularly addresses the third strategic objective in the SANBI Strategy for Plant Taxonomic Research (2015 – 2020), and would be performed in the context of a full taxonomic revision of the genus (addressing the second strategic objective. Detailed studies of vegetative and reproductive morphology are needed for a complete a revision of the genus Pavonia Cav. as well as elucidating the phylogenetic relationships.

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