

**Title:** Systematics of *Ursinia* subgenus *Sphenogyne* (Asteraceae)

**Description:** *Ursinia* is almost entirely southern African (one species extending to Ethiopia) and currently comprises ca. 39 species (Prassler 1967). They are easily recognized by their often large showy ray florets, paleate involucre, scarious involucral bracts and fruit crowned by a pappus of large, white spreading scales. It is the latter character which gives rise to the rather apt common name, Parachute Daisy. The genus is subdivided into two subgenera. The one comprises mostly of annuals and the other largely perennial taxa. The main difference between the two subgenera however is the truncate vs appendaged paleae, geniculate vs straight or slightly curved fruit, and uniseriate vs biseriate pappus. The genus was last revised by Prassler in 1967 but recent field studies have shown that the taxonomy is far from satisfactory. This study will focus on producing a taxonomic revision of *Ursinia* subgenus *Sphenogyne* including a molecular phylogenetic analyses, with morphological and anatomical studies.

**Field:** Taxonomy

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**Level:** MSc