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On the Taxonomy of Plantaginaceae Juss. Sensu Lato: evidence from SEM of the Seed Coat

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**Abstract:** SEM of the seed coat was studied in 41 taxa of the Plantaginaceae sensu lato. The study included 31 taxa of *Plantago* L. and 10 taxa that were formerly assigned to the Scrophulariaceae, representing the genera *Antirrhinum* L., *Digitalis* L., *Linaria* Mill. and *Veronica* L. The obtained data were analysed by the NT sys-PC program package using the UPGMA clustering method. The study showed that *Veronica* possessed certain affinities to *Plantago* species, thus giving extra support to earlier views that Plantaginaceae sensu stricto and Scrophulariaceae sensu lato are allied through *Veronica*. The study also favoured the paraphyly of *Plantago* subgenus *Albicans* sensu Rahn (1996) and the retention of *P. camtschatica* Link. subgenus *Plantago* L. and *P. alpina* L., *P. crassifolia* Forssk. and *P. salsa* Pall. subgenus *Coronopus* (Lam. & DC.) Rahn as distinct taxa. The monophyly of Plantaginaceae sensu lato was reassessed to a certain extent.

**Key Words:** Plantaginaceae, *Plantago*, Scrophulariaceae, SEM, Seed coat, Taxonomy

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