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Species of the Day: Allium pskemense B. Fedtsch

<u>Allium pskemense B. Fedtsch</u> is listed as 'Endangered' in the Red List Book of Threatened Species of Uzbekistan. Native to central Asia, it is a wild perennial related to the common onion. It is a rare and protected plant, and is restricted in its distribution to the Tien-Shan mountains of southern Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Renowned for its curative properties, and due to its widespread use in traditional cooking and medicine, *Allium pskemense* has been severely overharvested, although there are reports of it being occasionally planted in home gardens.

In Uzbekistan the species is currently being used for research on breeding and, to a lesser extent, for screening for pest and disease resistance (having shown resistance to onion rust *Puccinia allii*). Some demonstration plots of wild *Allium* have been set up in the Tashkent Botanical Garden to help raise awareness of the importance of conserving crop wild relatives.









