

## New noteworthy records of flowering plants in Cyprus (1995–2022)

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Abstract. – This paper deals with specimen-based records of 30 taxa, of which the following are new to Cyprus or have been documented by specimens for the first time: *Alopecurus arundinaceus* (classified as indigenous), *Heterotheca subaxillaris* subsp. *subaxillaris* (naturalized non-invasive), *Bromus catharticus*, *Carya illinoensis*, *Cydonia oblonga*, *Eriobotrya japonica*, *Leonotis nepetifolia*, *Physalis ixocarpa*, *Potamogeton coloratus*, *Saponaria officinalis* and *S. sicula* (all casual neophytes). Other cases concern rare and endangered taxa. There are also brief taxonomic notes on *Aegilops triuncialis* and its infraspecific taxa, *Althenia filiformis* s. l., *Cerastium semidecandrum* and *Ruppia drepanensis*.

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### Introduction

This paper is another continuation of a series started five years ago (Hand 2017), in which the intention and criteria for the selection of taxa and data were outlined. The new instalment, also the first with several authors, again focusses on taxa new for Cyprus, taxa with a very scattered distribution on the island or taxa with restricted distribution range in a single or few phytogeographical divisions. In various cases occurrence status is clarified and taxonomic issues are discussed briefly.

This series of noteworthy records is to be continued in loose succession. Authors who do not wish to write separate contributions for *Cypricola*, please contact the corresponding author.

### Material and Methods

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow Hand & al. (2011–) and herbarium abbreviations Thiers (2022); the private herbarium of G. Hadjikyriakou is indicated as "Herb. GH". First records for any phytogeographical unit are marked with a "+". Plants listed in the Red Data Book are marked with the abbreviation RDB followed by the status, which is explained in full detail by Tsintides & al. (2007). Known data concerning the distribution of taxa in Cyprus are not repeated here but can be found in the online checklist for Cyprus (Hand & al. 2011–), which aims at a complete recording of specimen-based records. Georeferenced data are not presented here but are stored in a database. They will be published at a later date making them accessible via the above-mentioned website.

## Results

### Spermatophyta

#### **Asteraceae**

##### ***Heterotheca subaxillaris* (Lam.) Britton & Rusby subsp. *subaxillaris***

+ Division 4: Ormideia, SW, near motorway bridge, roadside, alt. 20 m, 1.12.2003, G. Hadjikyriakou 5846, det. F. Verloove (B, BR, Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. The plant was first discovered by R. White. It already proved to be established at this site. Since then, however, no significant spread has been noticed in Cyprus. Camphorweed originates from N America, but is now considered an established neophyte in parts of S America as well as in Israel (Danin & Fragman-Sapir 2016–, POWO 2022). The infraspecific classification remains controversial; following Semple (2022), the material from Cyprus is the nominate subspecies. According to mapping data (Danin & Fragman-Sapir 2016–), the species has already spread widely in the coastal zone of Israel. Therefore, its spread in Cyprus should be observed carefully. Currently, it is classified as ‘Naturalized non-invasive’.



Fig. 1: *Heterotheca subaxillaris* subsp. *subaxillaris*, Ormideia, 29.3.2018. – Georgios Hadjikyriakou.

## **Boraginaceae**

### ***Buglossoides incrassata* subsp. *splitgerberi* (Guss.) E. Zippel & Selvi**

+ Division 3: Agia Varvara, beside E 606 towards Nata, at turn-off to chicken farm, abandoned field, alt. 144 m, 6.4.2015, R. Hand 7154 & C. Makris (CYP).

### ***Myosotis paucipilosa* (Grau) Ristow & Hand**

Division 2: Agios Theodoros, W flank of Papoutsas, at road c. 100 m before junction, debris on banks and vineyards, alt. 1209 m, 30.4.2022, R. Hand 9454 (CYP). – Farmakas, slopes above conspicuous bend of road F 982 c. 1 km above village, on debris, alt. 1047 m, 25.4.2022, R. Hand 9439 (CYP).

The taxon, which has only recently been distinguished from *M. refracta* Boiss. (see Hand & Ristow in Hand 2015), is not rare in parts of the Troodos range, but its distribution is still insufficiently known.

## **Caryophyllaceae**

### ***Cerastium semidecandrum* L. – RDB: DD**

Division 2: Kionia area, on road to summit, slope near to road barrier, among rocks, alt. 1314 m, 31.3.2019, R. Hand 9248, G. Hadjikyriakou & C. Makris (CYP).

The few records from Cyprus, available so far, are indexed via the online checklist (Hand & al. 2011–). The species seems to be relatively rare, but is certainly also overlooked. In addition, there are taxonomic problems, that affect the new collection as well. The plants were very delicate, with strongly compressed inflorescences and much reduced uppermost bracts. The latter showed hyaline margins up to one third of the length, on at least some of the plants. The seeds were light brown coloured. Overall, the plants are very reminiscent of *C. pumilum* Curtis. Unfortunately, there are hardly any studies from the south-east of the distribution range. However, variations corresponding to the collected plants are known from the north of the range (see for example Kurtto 2001).

### ***Saponaria officinalis* L.**

+ Division 2: Opposite Troodos ski terminal, road bank, alt. 1800 m, 3.9.2022, G. Hadjikyriakou 7774 (Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. The species is known from the area since about ten years (R. Hand) and has recently been confirmed by photo documentation (2022, M. Scheuch). All plants belong to a 'flore pleno' variant. After an on-spot visit on 3.9.2022 by G. Hadjikyriakou, it was concluded, that the occurrence of the population is actually the result of an illegal deposition of rooted plants, that is why they still possess their 'flore-pleno' character. Currently, they start to spread slowly vegetatively. Perhaps they originate from the gardens of the ski club on the other side of the road or from the adjacent villages or even from gardens in the vicinity. This plant has been, long ago, observed in gardens of the near-by villages, i. e., Prodromos and Kyperounda (the latter is documented with pictures, collection G. Hadjikyriakou). It must be classified as 'Casual'.

***Saponaria sicula* Raf.**

+ Division 2: Opposite Troodos ski terminal, road bank, alt. 1800 m, 3.9.2022, G. Hadjikyriakou 7772 (Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. It was found together with the previous species, also as a 'flore pleno' variant. Otherwise, the details correspond exactly to those of the previous species, except that a garden culture in Cyprus has not been documented so far. To be classified as 'Casual'.

**Chenopodiaceae**

***Beta adanensis* Pamukç. ex Aellen**

+ Division 2: Kato Drys, halfway between village and Timiou Prodromou chapel, abandoned field, marly soil, alt. 549 m, 22.4.2022, R. Hand 9431 (CYP).

***Beta macrocarpa* Guss.**

Division 4: Larnaka, Spiro's Beach, halfway between costal road and birdwatching hide, salt marsh, alt. 2 m, 21.4.2022, R. Hand 9430 (CYP).

In Cyprus, the distribution patterns of this and the previous species are still incompletely known. According to the mapping results available so far, *B. macrocarpa* is associated with more or less halophilous habitats in the lowlands. *B. adanensis*, on the other hand, occurs almost exclusively on marly soils and up to medium altitudes.

**Juglandaceae**

***Carya illinoensis* (Wangenh.) K. Koch** (Syn.: *C. pecan* (Marshall) Nutt.)

+ Division 2: Kampi, nature trail, by stream, fragments of riverine forest with many formerly cultivated fruit trees, alt. 831 m, 30.4.2022, R. Hand 9451 (CYP).

First record for Cyprus. In recent decades, the cultivation of this fruit tree has increased significantly on the island. Meikle (1985) does not mention the species at all, Tsintides & al. (2002) treat the pecan tree only with a short note. At the mentioned site, a young tree of about 9 m height was found, which was not planted, but not far from cultivated old trees. It must be classified as 'Casual'.

**Lamiaceae**

***Leonotis nepetifolia* (L.) R. Br.** (Syn.: *Phlomis nepetifolia* L.)

+ Division 3: West of Episkopi Lemesou, along agricultural road, among *Rubus sanctus* and herbs, alt. 10 m, 7.1.2019, G. Hadjikyriakou 7634 (Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. The native range of the species comprises large parts of tropical Africa and the Indian Subcontinent; it is also widely naturalised in tropical regions elsewhere (POWO 2022). Apparently, a garden escapee from the near-by houses. In Cyprus, it must be classified as 'Casual'. It may also be the first or one of the first records of naturalisation in the Mediterranean region.

## **Plantaginaceae**

### ***Plantago uliginosa* F. W. Schmidt**

Division 2: Pedoulas, along brook above S end of village, in orchards, alt. 1160 m, 22.9.2010, R. Hand 5726 & C. S. Christodoulou (CYP).

The distribution and altitudinal range of this taxon, which has so far hardly been distinguished from *P. major* L. s. str. in Cyprus, are insufficiently documented.

## **Poaceae**

### ***Aegilops kotschy* Boiss.**

+ Division 5: Athalassa forest, roadside, between 50–100 m south of the southern gate of Athalassa forest nursery, alt. 170 m, 21.4.1999, G. Hadjikyriakou 4422 (Herb. GH).

### ***Aegilops triuncialis* L. (Syn.: *A. triuncialis* subsp. *bozdagensis* Cabi & Doğan)**

Division 2: Troodos, 150 m east of Chionistra junction, inner road bank, on loose rocks, alt. 1700 m, 8.7.2019, G. Hadjikyriakou 7758 (B, Herb. GH). – Lagoudera – Madari, agricultural road bank, alt. 1400 m, 1.6.2001, G. Hadjikyriakou 5291 & C. S. Christodoulou (B, Herb. GH).

For good reasons, van Slageren (1994), the monographer of the genus *Aegilops*, did not accept any eco-geographically defined subspecies in *A. triuncialis* as a result of his material-rich study, but only two varieties. The checklist for Cyprus follows this line (Hand & al. 2011–). The occasional upgrading of the variety *A. triuncialis* var. *persica* (Boiss.) Eig to a subspecies seems inappropriate, as it occurs widely together with the nominate variety in SW Asia. Recently, Cabi & al. (2018) described *A. triuncialis* subsp. *bozdagensis* as a local endemic from SW Turkey. The authors mention in passing and only a few of the names synonymised by van Slageren (1994), including *A. triuncialis* subsp. *caput-medusae* Zhuk. described from the same mountain range in Anatolia. Unfortunately, this and other names are not discussed further.

Plants morphologically corresponding to the newly described subspecies from Turkey occur sporadically also in Cyprus, at similar altitudes as there. It is therefore not an endemic taxon. We consider it as a subspecies to be overrated. Whether other varieties besides the two accepted by van Slageren (1994) have a justification must be shown by further investigations. The analysis of the numerous infraspecific names already available should be one of the bases for this, namely of *A. triuncialis* subsp. *caput-medusae*. The characterisation of var. *persica* in the identification key and in the description by van Slageren (1994) are somewhat contradictory. According to the key, the lateral glumes can be awnless. But eventually, it also appears from Fig. 76 and the illustrated type that the author considers plants with the morphology of the newly described subspecies from Turkey to fall into the variability of var. *persica*.

***Alopecurus arundinaceus* Poir.**

+ Division 2: Omodos–Mandria, damp place by the road, alt. 790 m, 3.4.2018, G. Hadjikyriakou 7601 (Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. There is an old statement by Smith (in Sibthorp & Smith 1806) that the closely related and morphologically similar species *A. pratensis* L. occurs in Cyprus ("Circa Athenas, et in insulâ Cypro"), but this statement is already considered doubtful by Holmboe (1914). Meikle (1985) agrees and also states that this species has not been found in the neighbouring regions of Cyprus. The above-mentioned new occurrence was discovered by C. Makris, first identified as *A. pratensis* and later revised by G. Hadjikyriakou as *A. arundinaceus*. Both species are perennial and closely related. However, *A. pratensis* is characterised by glumes with parallel sides or being convergent at the apex and a pointed lemma, while *A. arundinaceus* is distinguished by the apically divergent glumes and the obliquely truncated lemma. In contrast to *A. pratensis*, the other species occurs in many regions of the E Mediterranean, for instance southwards to central Israel (Danin & Fragman-Sapir 2016–). However, as the Eurasian species, which is a common neophyte in many parts of North America (POWO 2022), is also spread via the grass seed trade for forage and erosion control (see, e. g., The Minnesota Wildflowers Information Organization 2006–), a recent introduction to Cyprus cannot be excluded. On the other hand, the occurrence of the hygrophilous species lies in an area of the island that has only been moderately studied floristically. Until further results are available, we consider the species to be indigenous to Cyprus. It is also unclear whether the species can be divided into subspecies, as there is no monographic treatment.



Fig. 2: *Alopecurus arundinaceus*, Omodos–Mandria, 7.4.2018. – Georgios Hadjikyriakou.

***Avena hirtula* Lag.**

+ Division 3: Akrounta–Dierona, roadside, alt. 400 m, 12.5.2005, *G. Hadjikyriakou* 6376 & *R. Hand* (Herb. GH).

It seems to be a rare plant in Cyprus.

***Bromus catharticus* Vahl**

+ Division 2: Cross-roads Kato Amiantos–Pelendri, disturbed place by the Kourris River, alt. 920 m, 9.7.1997, *K. Kyprou* in *G. Hadjikyriakou* 2766, det. *G. Hadjikyriakou* (ARI, CYP, Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. *B. catharticus*, a native of S America, is mentioned by Meikle (1985), based on the report by Jones & Merton (1958). According to the latter source it has been selected in the 1950s as a pasture plant, on experimental scale, in the Plant Introduction Nursery. Referring to this, Della (1999) lists the occurrence of the species as questionable for Cyprus. The collection from Kato Amiantos area, suggests that it has been planted in the vicinity, at least experimentally. It must be classified as 'Casual'.

***Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers. var. *dactylon***

+ Division 2: Agios Ioannis, S of Vouni, vineyards by the road to Arminou, on a track, alt. 744 m, 21.6.2018, *R. Hand* 9040 (CYP).

The find is worth mentioning because it is a new altitude maximum.

***Festuca arundinacea* Schreb.**

+ Division 3: Episkopi Lemesou, near grass plantation, alt. 5 m, 12.4.1996, *P. Papaioannou* in *G. Hadjikyriakou* 1785 (Herb. GH).

Apparently, a cultivation escapee. It must be classified as 'Casual' for this lowland division.

***Lolium subulatum* Vis.** (Syn.: *L. loliaceum* auct. cypr.)

+ Division 3: Apsiou, NE of Panagia Amirous monastery, streambed c. 30 m above forest road, serpentic debris in open pine forest, alt. 377 m, 27.4.2022, *R. Hand* 9445 (CYP).

***Narduroides salzmannii* Rouy**

Division 3: Apsiou, NE of Panagia Amirous monastery, streambed c. 30 m above forest road, open, fine, sandy, serpentic debris in streambed, alt. 377 m, 27.4.2022, *R. Hand* 9444 (CYP).

The discovery of the species in Cyprus and its general chorology was described by Hand & Scholz (in Hand 2006). Now, after an intensive search, another find was made, again in Lemesos forest and in a very special habitat: fine, predominantly sandy substrate in a stream gorge above serpentine. The very delicate grass species is easy to overlook and to confuse with species such as *Psilurus incurvus* (Gouan) Schinz & Thell. but was also intensively searched for in similar habitats elsewhere in Cyprus

in vain. The very specific habitat requirements in Cyprus can possibly be explained by its location in the extreme east of the distribution range.

## ***Polygonaceae***

### ***Rumex vesicarius* L. –RDB: VU**

+ Division 2: Vavla, c. 25 m before chapel Panagia tis Agapis, road bank, alt. 430 m, 24.4.2022, R. Hand 9435 (CYP).

The species is not rare in the wider surroundings of the chapel and occurs in scattered populations.

## ***Potamogetonaceae***

### ***Althenia filiformis* F. Petit s. l.**

Division 4: Larnaka, Larnaka salt lake, small lake left to the road before Hala Tekke mosque, shallow brackish water over rocky ground. alt. 0 m, 26.4.2022, R. Hand 9441 (CYP); *ibid.*, 5.5.2022, R. Hand 9463 (CYP).

The occurrence of the genus *Althenia* in Cyprus was long overlooked and only recently documented by Christia & al. (2011). The authors identified the plants as *A. filiformis*. A hidden earlier reference to occurrences of the genus can be found on a herbarium label for *Ruppia drepanensis* Tineo (see Lambinon 1995); however, details were never published. Also, a herbarium voucher has not been found so far, but could be in Liège/Belgium (LG). On the label the name *A. orientalis* (Tzelev) García-Mur. & Talavera is noted. If the material collected in 2022 is determined according to the key of García Murillo & Talavera (1986), the plants most likely belong to *A. orientalis* subsp. *betpakdalensis* (Tzelev) García-Mur. & Talavera, although not all characteristics fit. The latter work is strongly criticised by Tison (2011). After checking French material, many details could not be confirmed. He could only distinguish two taxa, which, however, can only be differentiated by leaf anatomy (see also key in Tison & de Foucault 2014) and urges further studies of the genus. As the Cyprus checklist does not accept taxa based on anatomical features alone, this request is supported. Until then, the acceptance of a broadly defined *A. filiformis* is recommended.

### ***Potamogeton coloratus* Hornem.**

+ Division 3: Akrotiri excavation, Episkopi Bay, perennial pool on fixed sandy substrate, alt. 5 m, 9.5.2021, C. Makris in G. Hadjikyriakou 7770 (Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus, discovered by M. Philippou, who informed C. Makris about the finding. In Cyprus, aquatic plants that occur exclusively in artificial waters created since the 20th century are generally classified as neophytes. The Akrotiri peninsula with its wetlands of international importance is also well studied floristically. It seems unlikely that the species has been overlooked so far. The peninsula is also considered a hotspot of E Mediterranean bird migration (Flint & Stewart 1992), so a relatively recent introduction is likely. It remains to be seen whether the species becomes estab-



lished. It occurs in parts of Europe, NW Africa and Turkey (Wiegleb & Kaplan 1998), but is absent from, for example, the Aegean Islands, Crete and Israel (Dimopoulos & al. 2013, Danin & Fragman-Sapir 2016–). For the time being, it is classified as 'Casual'.

## **Ranunculaceae**

### ***Ranunculus repens* L.** – RDB: VU

Division 2: Potamitissa, at stream, upwards from church, various places in riverine forest, alt. 848 m, 1.5.2022, *R. Hand 9455* (CYP).

## **Rosaceae**

### ***Cydonia oblonga* L.**

+ Division 2: Kampi, nature trail, near first bridge (from start at restaurant Potamos), fragments of riverine forest with many formerly cultivated fruit trees, alt. 824 m, 30.4.2022, *R. Hand 9452* (CYP).

First specimen-based record for Cyprus. Quince "is occasionally cultivated in Cyprus" according to Meikle (1977) which is confirmed by Tsintides & al. (2002). The latter also mention observations of naturalised shrubs in various parts of Cyprus, although details have never been published. The tree mentioned above was c. 5 m high, and grew on a wall where it certainly was not planted. However, older trees in the vicinity most probably were relicts of cultivation. No self-sustaining populations are known from Cyprus and thus the species is classified as 'Casual'.

### ***Eriobotrya japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl.**

+ Division 5: Dali, ancient Idalion, palace area, among ruins, alt. 255 m, 3.5.2022, *R. Hand 9458* (CYP).

First specimen-based record for Cyprus. At the cited location a c. 3 m high shrub was found, certainly not planted there. In Cyprus, the species is widely cultivated for its edible fruits and as an ornamental plant (Tsintides & al. 2002). The species regularly naturalises, but is not popular with collectors, so there are no detailed documented records. It should be classified as 'Casual'.

## **Ruppiaceae**

### ***Ruppia drepanensis* Tineo ex Guss.**

Division 4: Larnaka, Larnaka salt lake, small lake left to the road before Hala Tekke mosque, shallow brackish water over rocky ground, alt. 0 m, 26.4.2022, *R. Hand 9442* (CYP); *ibid.*, 5.5.2022, *R. Hand 9462* (CYP).

The first record of this species for Cyprus was by Lambinon (1995). The new findings are in the closer vicinity of the only roughly described locality. Discussions about the taxonomically controversial taxon *R. drepanensis* have been recently summarised by De Castro & al. (2021). The authors conclude, based on morphological studies of

Italian material and genetic studies of *Ruppia* as a whole, that *R. drepanensis* should be considered a distinct species closely related to *R. spiralis* L. ex Dumort. (Syn.: *R. cirrhosa* sensu Meikle 1985). In Cyprus, both taxa may have been confused so far. Further investigations are necessary; a new determination key is accessible via the on-line checklist for the Cypriot flora (Hand & al. 2011–). Apparently, the occurrences in Cyprus represent the easternmost in the Mediterranean. It may be speculation, but long-distance dispersal by greater flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) would be a conceivable possibility. Migrations of this bird species from S France and Spain to Cyprus have been documented (Flint & Stewart 1992).

## **Solanaceae**

### ***Physalis angulata* L.**

Division 3: West margins of Germasogeia dam, dry place, alt. 80 m, 8.9.2016, G. Hadjikyriakou 7457 (Herb. GH).

+ Division 5: Two kilometres east of Milia Ammochostou, abandoned land, alt. 40 m, 19.9.2022, G. Hadjikyriakou 7777 (Herb. GH).

The occurrence in the area of the Germasogeia reservoir has already been dealt with earlier (Hand 2019). The above-mentioned earliest collection underlines the persistence of the population at this site. Its occurrence in Division 5 suggests that it must be classified as 'Casual' there.

### ***Physalis ixocarpa* Brot. ex Hornem.**

+ Division 3: Mouth of Asprokremmos dam, cultivated land, alt. 20 m, 24.6.1995, C. Makris in G. Hadjikyriakou 1711 (Herb. GH); Kouklia–Chapotami, cultivated land, alt. 5 m, 5.9.1999, G. Hadjikyriakou 4888 (Herb. GH).

First record for Cyprus. The species, originally from Central America, now occurs worldwide as a neophyte (POWO 2022), in the E Mediterranean for example it has been recorded from several regions of Greece (Dimopoulos & al. 2013). An identification key for the most common *Physalis* species in the Euro-Mediterranean region, illustrations and further literature can be found in Verloove (2022), also for the very similar and taxonomically controversial taxon *P. philadelphica* Lam., which according to that source is "possibly merely an improved, cultivated form of *Physalis ixocarpa*". For the moment, it must be classified as 'Casual'.

## **Valerianaceae**

### ***Valerianella triceras* Bornm. – RDB: VU**

Division 2: Farmakas, slopes above conspicuous bend of road F 982 c. 1 km above village, on debris, alt. 1047 m, 25.4.2022, R. Hand 9438 (CYP).

In 2022, following a comparatively rainy winter, *V. triceras* was somewhat more common in the eastern part of the Troodos Mountains (Papoutsas-Palaichori-Farmakas)

than in other years. In any case, the species is clearly more frequent and widespread than reported by Tsintides & al. (2007).

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