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A New Record from Lebanon: *Scilla siberica* Haw. subsp. *armena* (Grossh.) Mordak (Liliaceae)

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Abstract: *Scilla siberica* Haw. subsp. *armena* (Grossh.) Mordak (Liliaceae) has not been previously reported among the flora of Lebanon. In spring 2005 it was collected from the rocky cliffs of a natural rocky bridge in the high mountain zone of the Mount Lebanon Range.

Key Words: Biodiversity, Liliaceae, flora, Lebanon, Mediterranean

Introduction

Genus *Scilla* L. is represented in Lebanon by 4 species: *S. hanburyi* Baker, *S. autumnalis* L., *S. hyacinthoides* L., and *S. cilicica* Siehe (Post, 1932; Mouterde, 1966). The first 2 taxa are autumn flowering plants, while the second 2 are spring flowering. Their inflorescence is denser than that of *S. siberica* Haw. subsp. *armena* (Grossh.) Mordak, which comprises 1-2 flowers (Mordak, 1984). *S. siberica* subsp. *armena* is an Irano-Turanian element; its geographical distribution encompasses Turkey, Georgia, and Soviet Armenia (Mordak, 1984). While surveying the flora of a habitat composed of eroded rock faces in the high mountain zone of Lebanon, single-flowered *Scilla* specimens were discovered inhabiting the rocks. Thorough morphological analysis supported the taxonomic identity of *S. siberica* subsp. *armena*.

Results and Discussion

Scilla siberica Haw. in Bot. Reposit. 6: t. 365 (1804), subsp. *armena* (Grossh.) Mordak in Bot. Zhurn. 56:1450 (1971). Synonym: *S. armena* Grossh. in Monit. Jard. Bot. Tiflis ser. 2, 3:198 (1927). Figure 1.

Examined specimens: Lebanon: Kesrouan Province: Kfarzubyan - Jisr el Hajar, 1667 m, lat 33°59'55.8"N, long 35°49'28.3"E, 12 April 2005, R. Haber and M. Semaan, no. 3539 (BEI).

Bulb 0.7 cm diameter, tunics fuscous; leaves 2-3, linear 60-80 x 5-7 mm; scapes 1-3, 10-11 cm; bracts 1-2 mm, amplexicaul, bifid, deltoid, cordate and inflated at base; raceme 1-2 flowered; pedicels 4 mm, shorter than perianth segments; perianth segments 13-15 x 4-5 mm, deep blue, with dark midrib, spreading, conduplicate at base; filaments 9 mm long, 1-2 mm broad at base; anthers 3 mm, deep blue; ovary subglobose, 3-5 mm in diameter; style 4-6 mm, short and thick; seeds ovoid, c. 3 x 2 mm, pale brown.

Distribution and habitat. *S. siberica* subsp. *armena* was found growing on the rocky faces of a natural rocky bridge in the high mountain zone of the Kesrouan Caza at elevations between 1500 and 1700 m. It emerges from holes in the rocks with very little soil. The region receives considerable snow cover in winter with high annual precipitation and moderate temperatures in summer (Service Météorologique, 1966, 1967). Its population is quite small, comprising 15 specimens. Major prevailing threats include goat grazing and trampling by picnickers, who might also collect the flowers. The flowering season extends from April to May.

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Figure 1. *Scilla siberica* subsp. *armena*.

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