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First finding of *Linaria vulgaris* (*Scrophulariaceae*) in Sicily

Abstract

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The occurrence of *Linaria vulgaris* is reported in Sicily. Such species is known in the Italian Peninsula. Populations of this species have been observed respectively on the Nebrodi Mountains (N Sicily) and in proximity to Aidone (C Sicily).

Key words: *Linaria*, Chorology, Flora.

Introduction

Linaria vulgaris Mill. is a Euroasiatic species, occurring on most of the European continent, except for Portugal, the Northern Islands (Iceland, the Shetlands and the Spitsbergens) and some major Mediterranean islands (the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, Sicily and Crete) (Chater & al. 1968).

It is a hemicryptophyte scapose, 20-80 cm tall, with upright simple or ramous stalks. Its 20-60 mm linear leaves are pointed and single-ribbed, showing alternating disposition. Racemes are dense (from 5 to 30 flowers) provided with 2-8 mm peduncles, the calyx has 2-3 mm laciniae and 25-30 mm yellow corollas. Its spur is subulate and cone-shaped, upright and ranges from 9 to 2 mm; it has an ovaloid capsule (Fiori 1927).

Linaria vulgaris, common on untilled land, ruderal areas and road edges occurs in all the Italian regions, except on the two major islands (Sicily and Sardinia), from sea level to 1,500 m above sea level (Pignatti 1982).

As for Sicily, therefore, there wasn't any knowledge of its presence. A specimen coming form Aidone (Central Sicily) (Fig. 1) has been found in PAL among collections to be catalogued.

Recent explorations carried out on the Eastern area of the Nebrodi Mountains resulted in a new record on the northern side of Mt. Sambughetti (Northern Sicily) at about 1,100 m above sea level. The population was spotted on the edge of a *Quercus cerris* and *Ilex aquifolium* wood, on quartzarenitic substratum of Numidian Flysch (Vezzani & al. 1972), characterized by a Low Supramediterranean Upper Subhumid bioclimate (Bazan & al. 2006).

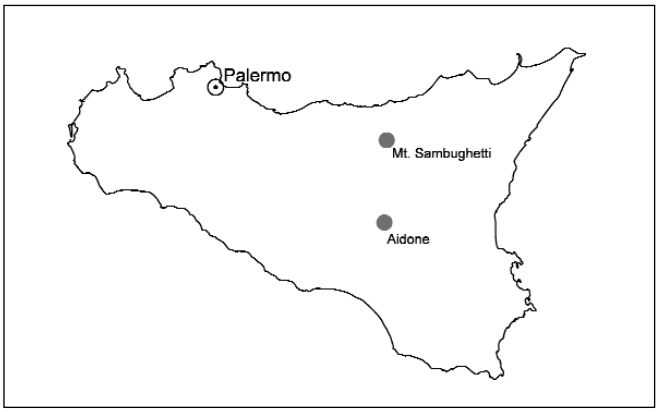

Fig. 1. The Sicilian localities of *Linaria vulgaris* on the Mt. Sambughetti (Nicosia) and Aidone.

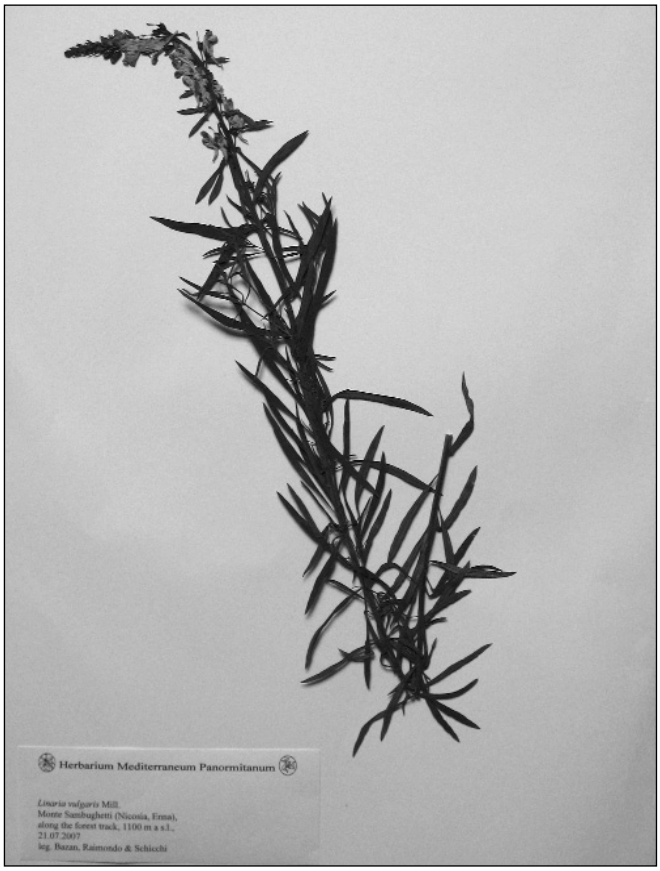

Fig. 2. *Linaria vulgaris:* the specimen from Mt. Sambughetti.

Linaria vulgaris in Mt. Sambugheti participates, together with other grasses and especially with other shrubs, such as *Rubus ulmifolius, Rosa canina, Prunus spinosa, Pyrus* sp., *Crataegus monogyna*, and so on, in a shrub community, quite common in this grazing area.

Given the distributive continuity of the species in the different Italian peninsular regions, its absence in Sicily, was considered an explorative gap that today is filled by the findings reported in this contributions.

Studied Materials

- Aidone (Enna), about 700 m above sea level, 13.5.1959, *Di Martino*, (PAL)
- Mt. Sambughetti (Nicosia, Enna), along the forest track, 1,100 m above sea level, 21.7.2007, *Bazan, Raimondo & Schicchi* (PAL) (Fig. 2).

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