



Article

***Allium cyrilli* (Amaryllidaceae): typification, taxonomy and update of the Italian distribution**

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Abstract

Allium cyrilli was long misinterpreted by Italian botanists and often confused with other taxa. In order to fix the application of this name, a lectotype is selected. The taxonomy of this species is clarified and discussed, especially in relation to the similar *A. nigrum*. Moreover, the distribution data of *A. cyrilli* in Italy are significantly updated, since the species is newly recorded for northern Italy (Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna and Veneto). The most useful qualitative and quantitative morphological characters, aimed to distinguish this species, are highlighted.

Key words: *Allium* sect. *Melanocrommyum*, identification key, Italian flora, Mediterranean

Introduction

Allium cyrilli Tenore (1827: 364) (Amaryllidaceae) belongs to *Allium* Linnaeus (1753: 294) subgen. *Melanocrommyum* Rouy in Rouy & Foucaud (1910: 378) sect. *Melanocrommyum* Webb & Berthelot (1848: 347) (Fritsch *et al.* 2010). This species is widespread in the eastern Mediterranean (Stearn 1980), but it was described from S. Italy, Apulia ("*Nasce né campi di Puglia, al Tavoliere*"). Currently, *A. cyrilli* is quoted for S. Italy only in Apulia and in Basilicata (Palanza 1900, Grande 1922, Gavioli 1947, Conti *et al.* 2005, Scoppola & Spampinato 2005). After its description, this species was often misinterpreted by Italian botanists, mainly because of the paucity of herbarium collections available. This scarce knowledge impeded the realisation of adequate analytical keys (e.g. Fiori 1923, Zangheri 1976, Garbari, 1982). The latter authors, indeed, focused their identification tools on the presence of bulbils, the shape of the leaves, colour and shape of flowers. The use of key characters caused many misidentifications, especially concerning *A. nigrum* Linnaeus (1762: 430; see Seisums 1998a, 1998b for more information on the nomenclature of this species). For this reason, it deemed us necessary to clarify and discuss the taxonomy and nomenclature of *A. cyrilli*.