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Typification, morphological characterization and distribution of *Knautia gussonei* (*Caprifoliaceae*)

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Abstract

Knautia gussonei is a species endemic to central Italy, described by Szabó and was based on a herbarium specimen collected by Gussone in Abruzzo. This species was long neglected or misinterpreted by Italian botanists and confused with *K. drymeia* subsp. *centrifrons*. Accordingly, to correct the application of this name, a specimen collected by Gussone in Abruzzo and kept in NAP is designated here as the lectotype. For *K. gussonei* a detailed morphological description and information about habitat, phenology and distribution are provided. Furthermore, morphological comparison between *K. gussonei* and *K. drymeia* subsp. *centrifrons* is provided.

Key words: Abruzzo, endemic, Italian flora, *Knautia*, taxonomy, typification

Introduction

Knautia gussonei Szabó (1934: 136) was first described from Central Italy (Abruzzo) based on a herbarium specimen collected by Gussone in 1823 and kept in NAP. The populations referable to this species were earlier reported as *K. sylvatica* (Linnaeus 1753: 142) Duby (1828: 257) (i.e., under the name *Scabiosa sylvatica*: Gussone 1826, Tenore 1830, 1831, Bertoloni 1835, Crugnola 1894) a name recently rejected as a *nomen ambiguum* (Gutermann 2010; Brummitt 2011) and previously interpreted in the sense of *K. drymeia* Heuffel (1856: 39) s.str. or *K. maxima* (Opiz in Berchtold & Opiz 1838: 203) J.Ortmann in Glückselig (1842: 86) [= *K. dipsacifolia* Kreutzer (1840: 223)]. After its description, *K. gussonei* was long neglected probably for the absence of a detailed morphological description or adequate analytical keys and cited yet as *K. sylvatica* (i.e. Zodda 1954, 1967 under the name *K. arvensis* var. *sylvatica*) or confused with *K. maxima* (i.e. Tammaro 1983 sub *K. dipsacifolia*). Ehrenforfer (1962) was the first stating *K. gussonei* was a species belonging to *K. drymeia* group. Later Ehrendorfer (1976) and Pignatti (1982) reported it only from its *locus classicus*, as a species endemic to central Italy (Abruzzo). More recently *K. gussonei* is recognized as a species endemic to central Italy (e.g., Greuter *et al.* 1986, Conti *et al.* 2005), but for the same area is also reported *K. drymeia* Heuffel subsp. *centrifrons* (Borbás 1904: 18) Ehrendorfer (1973: 263) (Tondi 1994, Conti 1998, Ballelli *et al.* 2005, Conti *et al.* 2005, Anzalone *et al.* 2010). The latter taxon, described from Capolago (southern Switzerland, close to the border of Italy) and Lecco (northern Italy), is known only from these two countries (Aeschimann *et al.* 2004, Conti *et al.* 2005).

During the study of some taxa described from central Apennine, we traced in NAP the original material on which the name *K. gussonei* was based. This has allowed us to critically review the herbarium specimens coming from central Apennine previously referred to *K. drymeia* subsp. *centrifrons* and to clarify the identity and distribution of *K. gussonei*.

This work was carried out within the initiative “Italian Loci Classici Census” (Domina *et al.* 2012), aimed at providing data on the original material of the plants described from Italy (e.g. Aghababyan & Raimondo 2011, Conti *et al.* 2011, Di Pietro *et al.* 2012, Gallo *et al.* 2012, Iamonico & Peruzzi 2012, Peruzzi & Carta 2013, Peruzzi *et al.* 2012, 2013a, 2013b, Bartolucci & Conti 2013, Bartolucci & Peruzzi 2013, Bartolucci *et al.* 2013, Bartolucci & Domina 2014, Iamonico & Peruzzi 2014).

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