A TAXONOMIC REVISION OF THE GENUS VULPIA C. C. GMEL. (POACEAE, POEAE) IN IRAN

A. Faramarzi, H. Saeidi & M. R. Rahiminejad

Received 06.06.2011. Accepted for publication 07.11.2012.


As a result of a taxonomic review of the Iranian materials of the genus Vulpia and the relevant literature this genus was recognized as possessing five species and four subspecies occurring in Iran. The novelities of this study for the flora of Iran are: describing one new taxon: V. unilateralis subsp. tomentosa; reporting one new record for the flora of Iran: V. ciliata subsp. plumosa; and literature correction of V. ciliata Dumort. and accepting the correct Name “Vulpia unilateralis (L.) Stace” for “Nardurus maritimus (L.) Murb.” for the flora of Iran.

Amene Faramarzi, Hojatollah Saeidi & Mohammad Reza Rahiminejad (correspondence <mrr@sci.ui.ac.ir>), Department of Biology, University of Isfahan, Isfahan 81746-73441, Iran.

Key words. Vulpia, Poaceae, taxonomy, revision, new taxa, Iran.

بازنگری تاکسونومی جنس Vulpia (Poaceae, Poeae) در ایران

آمده فرامرزی، دانشجوی کارشناسی ارشد، گروه زیست‌شناسی دانشگاه اصفهان.

حیت الله سعیدی، استادار گروه زیست‌شناسی دانشگاه اصفهان.

محمدرضا رحمی‌نژاد، استاد گروه زیست‌شناسی دانشگاه اصفهان.

به منابع بازیابی تاکسونومیک جنس Vulpia و منابع مربوط آن در ایران این جنس با پنج گونه و چهار زیرگونه در ایران به شناخته شانسته V. unilateralis subsp. tomentosa می‌شود. نوآوری این مطالعه برای فلویر ایران شامل موارد زیر است: معرفی یک تاکسون جدید: V. ciliata Dumort. و اصلاح نام‌کاذبی V. ciliata subsp. plumosa معرفی یک گروه جدید برای ایران: V. unilateralis (L.) Stace به کام Vulpia ciliata (L.) Stace مربوط می‌شود.

Introuction

The genus Vulpia was established as a monotypic taxon by Gmelin (1805) and has been the matter of great controversies both taxonomically and on literature points of view (Ledebour, 1853; Boissier, 1884; Post, 1896; Krechetovich and Boborov, 1934; Parsa, 1950; Guinochet and Faurel, 1955; Bor, 1968 and 1970; Stace and Cotton 1980; Nasir and Ali, 1982; Tsvelev, 1983; Stace, 1985; Lu and Phillips, 2006). Boissier (1884) in his account for the genus recognized V. myuros auct. L. and V. ciliata Pers. growing in Iran, afterward the number of species in this country was increased to 3 (V. myuros (L.) Gmelin, V. ciliata (Danithon) Link and V. hirtiligumis Boiss. and Hausskn.) by Parsa (1950). Bor (1970) subdividing the genus into two sections added two more species i. e., V. persica (Boiss. & Buhse) V. Krecz. & Bobrov in Komarv. and V. megalura (Nutt.) Rydb. to Parsa’s list from which the latter is of doubtful distribution in Iran (Bor 1970). This study aimed to review the taxonomic status of the genus Vulpia in Iran.

Materials and methods

In this study, 82 specimens specifically collected all around Iran for this investigation were taxonomically examined and their vouchers are deposited in the Herbarium of the University of Isfahan, in addition TARI’s Vulpia collection was also included in this study. Identifications were mainly based on Bor (1970). For taxonomic evaluations, the spikelet’s diagnostic features mainly derived from original publications were examined among the materials studied.

Results

The observations of this study showed that the genus Vulpia occurs with a total of 7 taxa including 5 species...
and 4 subspecies in Iran. This study showed that the best applicable discriminating characters for *Vulpia* taxa in Iran were that of the indumentums of lemmas. This structure showed a wide range of variability from glabrous, scabrous, ciliate (only in the upper part along margins), long-hairs along margins and often along the midrib to scabrous almost all over the surface due to very short spinules. However, lemmas features differed widely as: lanceolate, elliptic and ovate in shape and membranous, chartaceous, or coriaceous in texture. Lemmas always showed a long pointed apex but it cannot be accounted for an awn. Despite the high morphological variability of glumes, only its size is of diagnostic value in separating *V. myuros* from *V. persica*.

This study showed that the number of florets in each spikelet varies from 3 to 7 from which 0 (only in *V. unilateralis*) to 4 florets were sterile.

**Taxonomic discussion and conclusion**

1. *Vulpia myuros* (L.) C. C. Gmel., in: Fl. Bad. 1: 8 (1805), Fig. 1.
   

   *V. megalura* differs briefly from *V. myuros* in possessing ciliate lemmas along margins in the upper parts of the uppermost florets and glabrous lemmas in the lowermost florets, while in the latter species lemmas are mostly glabrous or rarely either scabrous only along the margins and midrib or in the upper parts.

   Cotton and Stace (1976) treated *V. megalura* as an infra-specific taxon (form) in *V. myuros*, a decision that was followed by Auquier (1977) who regarding the former species as a variety and Sojak (1980) that treated as a subsp. in the latter. Regarding the lack of very sharp and prominent features between these two taxa, *V. megalura* was considered as a synonym of *V. myuros*.

2. *Vulpia persica* (Boiss. & Buhse) Krecz. & Bobr. in Komar., Fl. URSS. 2: 535 (1934), Fig. 2.
   

3. *V. ciliata* Dumont, Obs. Gram. Belg. 100 (1824), Fig. 3.
   

   This species is mentioned in *Flora Iranica* (Bor 1970) as: *V. ciliata* Link. Based on the results of this study this species is recognized with two subspecies for the flora of Iran.

   - *subsp. ciliata*
     

   - *subsp. plumosa* Boiss., Fl. Or. 5: 629 (1884), Fig. 3.

4. *Vulpia hirtiglumis* Boiss. & Hausskn., Boiss., Fl. Or. 5: 629 (1884), Fig. 4.

5. *Vulpia unilateralis* (L.) Stace, Bot. Jour. Linn. Soc. 76: 350 (1978), Fig. 5.
   

   As Stace (1978) argued well, the genus *Nardurus* was established by Reichenbach (1830) based on a small grass which previously was treated differently in *Brachypodium*, *Festuca* and *Triticum* (*Nardurus* tenellus = *Festuca maritima*). He (Stace, 1978) in a synonymy regarding the concepts corresponding to *Nardurus*, made it a section under *Vulpia* and for the basionym *Triticum unilaterale* known *Vulpia unilateralis* (L.) Stace. While *Festuca maritima* and *Triticum unilaterale* were both described by Linnaeus in 1753 and 1767 and he, himself considered the former as a synonym for the latter (Linnaeus, 1767) however using this species epithet (*Vulpia maritima*) by Gray (1821) prevents the priority of *Festuca maritima* against *Triticum unilaterale*.

   The main reason separating the genera *Vulpia* and *Nardurus* is related to their inflorescence type, which is a panicle particularly at base in the former, while a raceme is mainly mentioned for the latter (Stace and Cotton, 1980; Tsvelev, 1983; Stace, 1985). Examining many specimens in this study showed that in so called *Nardurus maritimus* the second spike like (as mentioned by Stace 1985) inflorescence is in fact a panicle at base and raceme with very short spikelet pedicels (0.5 – 1.5 mm) for the rest. Therefore, the incorporation of *Nardurus maritimus* into *Vulpia*, as done by stace (1978) was accepted.

   - *subsp. unilateralis*
     
     - *Vulpia unilateralis* subsp. *tomentosa* Faramarzi &
Fig. 1: *Vulpia myuros*. Plant habit (a); spikelet (b); pedicels (c); lemmas (d); palea (e); upper glume (f); lower glume (g); inner surface of blade (h); ligules (i); caryopsis (j); node (k); anther and carpel (l). Map shows the distribution of *V. myuros* in Iran.
Fig. 2: *Vulpia persica*. Plant habit (a); spikelet (b); pedicels (c); lemmas (d); palea (e); upper glume (f); lower glume (g); inner surface of blade (h); ligules (i); caryopsis (j); node (k); anther and carpel (l). Map shows the distribution of *V. persica* in Iran.
Fig. 3: *Vulpia ciliata*. Plant habit (a); spikelet (b); pedicels (c); lemmas (d) [*V. ciliata* subsp. *plumosa* (d₁) and *V. ciliata* subsp. *ciliata* (d₂)]; palea (e); upper glume (f); lower glume (g); inner surface of blade (h); ligules (i); caryopsis (j); node (k); anther and carpel (l). Map shows the distribution of *V. ciliata* in Iran.
Fig. 4: Vulpia hirtiglumis. Plant habit (a); spikelet (b); pedicels (c); lemmas (d); pala (e); upper glume (f); lower glume (g); inner surface of blade (h); ligules (i); caryopsis (j); node (k); anther and carpel (l). Map shows the distribution of V. hirtiglumis in Iran.
Fig. 5: *Vulpia unilateralis*. Plant habit (a); spikelet (b); pedicels (c) [*V. unilateralis* subsp. *tomentosa* (c₁) and *V. unilateralis* subsp. *unilateralis* (c₂)]; lemmas (d) [*V. unilateralis* subsp. *tomentosa* (d₁) and *V. unilateralis* subsp. *unilateralis* (d₂)]; palea (e); upper glume (f) [*V. unilateralis* subsp. *tomentosa* (f₁) and *V. unilateralis* subsp. *unilateralis* (f₂)]; lower glume (g) [*V. unilateralis* subsp. *tomentosa* (g₁) and *V. unilateralis* subsp. *unilateralis* (g₂)]; inner surface of blade (h); ligules (i); caryopsis (j); node (k) [*V. unilateralis* subsp. *tomentosa* (k₁) and *V. unilateralis* subsp. *unilateralis* (k₂)]; anther and carpel (l). Map shows the distribution of *V. unilateralis* in Iran.
Rahiminejad, subsp. nov., Fig. 5.
Planta typo valde similis sed lemminusibus, glumis et
rachidisibus tomentosis.
Type. Iran, Southwest, Fars province, Shiraz, Sadrá
region, 1650 m, rocky places, fruiting 07. VI. 2010. 
Faramarzi 17672 (holotypus, the herbarium of
the University of Isfahan, pratyypus Kerman: Deh Bakri,
2134 m, 03.06.2012, Zoghi 16956 (the herbarium of
the University of Isfahan).

1. Spikelets without sterile florets: 5. V. unilateralis
1a-1. Lemmas glabrous to scabrous in the upper part
subsp. unilateralis
1a-2. Lemmas of all flowers pungent subsp. tomentosa
- Spikelets with sterile florets 2
2. Lemmas of all flowers pilose all over the surface or
only along the margins 3
- Lemmas glabrous, but somewhat scabrous 4
3. Lemmas long pilose along the margins and also
along the midrib and the remaining surface
3a-1. short pilose or scabrous
3a-2. glabrous
subsp. ciliata
subsp. plamosa
- Lemmas densely or sparcely pilose to tomentose
4. V. hirtiglumis
4. Lower glume 1/2-1/3 × upper
- Lower glume 1/3-1/6 × upper
2. V. persica
1. V. myuros

References
Aucquier, P. H. 1977: Bulletin du Jardin Botanique
National de Belgique 47 (1-2): 123. 
Boisser, E. 1884: Vulpia Gmel. in Flora Orientalis vol.
5 : 627-632. --Geneveae & Basileae.
Bor, N. L. 1968: Gramineae in Townsend, C. C., Geust,
- The ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Iraq,
Baghdad.
Bor, N. L. 1970: Vulpia Gmel. in Rechinger, K. H.
(ed.) Flora Iranica. 70: 88 91. --Graz.
Cotton, R. & Stace, C. A. 1976: Taxonomy of the
genus Vulpia (Graminaceae) I Chromosome numbers
and geographical distribution of the Old World
Gray, S. F. 1821: Natural Arrangement of British
Plants, According to Their Relation to Each Other
ii. 124. -London.
Gmelin, C. C. 1805: Vulpia myuros in Gmelin, C. C.
(ed.) Flora Badensis 1: 8-9. – Alsatica
Guinochet, M. & Faurel, L. 1955: Vulpia Gmel. in
Flore de L' Afrique du Nord. 3: 172-199. -Paul
Lechevalier. 12, Rue de Tornon, 12. Paris (VI statutes).
Krechetovich, V. L. & Boborov, E. G. 1934: Vulpia
Gmel. in Komarov, V. L., Rozhevits, Y. R. and
Shishkin, B. K. (eds.), Flora of the U. S. S. R.
(English translation) vol. 2: 425-428, Russian
Pages. -Bishingsingh Mamahendra Pal Singh and
Koeltz Scientific Books.
Ledebour, C. F. V. 1853: Flora Rossica sive
enumeration plantarum in totius imperii Rossica
provinciis Europaeis, Asiaticis and Americanis
hucusque observatarum: 349-350 - Stuttgratiae: 
sumptibus librarieae E. Schweizerbart.
Linnaeus, C. 1767: Mantissa Plantarum. Generem
Editionis vi et Specierum Editionis ii. 35. 
Flora of China 22. -St. Louis.
143. -Herbarium Royal Botanical Gardens Kew,
England.
- Publication du Ministere de L'education Musee
d'Histoire Naturelle de Tehran, Tehran.
Post, G. E. 1896: Flora of Syria, Palestine and Sinai
from the Taurus to Ras Muhammad, and from the
Mediterranean Sea to the Syrian desert 8: 191.
-Beirut, Syria: Syrian Protestant College.
Reichenbach, H. G. L. 1830: Flora Germanica
excursoria ex affinitate regni vegetabilis naturali
disposita, sive principia synopsicos plantarum in
Germania terrisque in Europa media adjacentibus
sponte nascentium culturarque frequentius 19.
-apud Carolum Cnobl. 
Sojak, J. 1980: Casopis Narodneho Muzea v Praze,
Rada Přirodovědná 148 (2): 77. -Prague.
Stace, C. A. 1978: Changing concepts in the genus
Nardus reunen (Gramineae). -BOI. J. Unn.
Sac., 76: 344-350.
Stace, C. A. & Cotton, R. 1980: Vulpia Gmel. in Tutin,
T. G., Heywood, V. H., Burges, N. A., Moore, D.
Stace, C. A. 1985: Vulpia Gmel. in Davis, P. H. (ed.),
Flora of Turkey and the East Aegean Islands vol 9:
Tsveler, N. N. 1983: Vulpia Gmel. in Grasses of the
Soviet Union II: 636-640. -Oxonian press PVT.
LTD.