

A RECORD OF *DUCHESNEA INDICA* (ROSACEAE) IN IRAN, ITS WESTERNMOST DISTRIBUTIONAL LIMIT IN ASIA

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Duchesnea indica is reported for the first time from Iran, Caspian forests, Nowshahr area, 170-950 m above s. l. Based on the new gathering westernmost distribution of the species extends to Iran as well.

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حبیب زارع، الیاس رمضانی کاکرودی و طیبه امینی

گزارش جدید گونه *Duchesnea indica* (Rosaceae) از ایران، غربی ترین حد انتشار گونه در آسیا

گونه *Duchesnea indica* که از شمال ایران و از جنگلهای جنوب نوشهر (ارتفاع ۱۷۰ و ۹۵۰ متری از سطح دریا) جمع‌آوری گردیده، برای اولین بار از ایران گزارش می‌شود و جنگلهای شمال ایران به همراه جنگلهای قفقاز به عنوان غربی‌ترین محدوده انتشار جهانی این گونه به حساب می‌آید. این گونه به ظاهر شباهت زیادی با گونه *Fragaria vesca* دارد.

Introduction

In a floristic study of the central Caspian forests (South of Nowshahr, Mazandaran province), a plant species, much similar to *Fragaria vesca*, was collected in two different forest associations: *Parrotia persica-Carpinus betulus* and *Acer velutinum-Alnus subcordata-Carpinus betulus*. Among the companion species following taxa may be mentioned: *Potentilla reptans*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Oxalis corniculata*, *Teucrium hyrcanicum*, *Euphorbia amygdaloides*, *Viola odorata*, *Primula heterochroma*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Rubus* sp., and *Carex* sp. This species can easily be distinguished with *Fragaria vesca* by yellow petals, five 3-lobed bracts with the sepals and dry and bland receptacle.

Duchesnea indica (Andrews) Focke (Indian strawberry, False strawberry)

Plants perennial, stoloniferous (producing roots at the nodes); stolones thin, up to ca. 100 cm long, covered with scattered pilose to strigose hairs; leaves alternate, stipulate, trifoliate, small, 3-5×4-6 cm, normally 3-lobed but rarely with 4-5 lobes; leaflets ovate, serrate,

strigose above and below (especially on veins); stipules oblong-lanceolate; inflorescence usually erect, peduncles up to 10 cm long, usually ending to one flower; outer sepals foliaceous, 3-5-toothed or lobed at apex; inner sepals as long as the outer or almost so, ovate-lanceolate and apiculate to aristate, ciliolate at margins; with five 3-lobed bracts alternating with the sepals. Bracts ca. 6 mm long and broad in flowering; petals 5, ovate, yellow, 4-5*7-8 mm; fruit receptacle red, conic to ovate, with short stalk, edible, much like a strawberry but tasteless. Despite strawberry, the fruit has a rough surface with scattered, raised achenes.

Mazandaran:, Caspian forests, south of Nowshahr, road of Veisar, 36° 35' 30" N, 51° 31' 20" E, 170 m a. s.l., Zare & Ramezani Kakroudi 10319 & 36° 31' 25" N, 51° 30' 30" E, 930 m a. s.l., Ramezani Kakroudi 10318.

This species has more or less been distributed in eastern Asia, i.e. from Afghanistan to Japan. In Flora Iranica (Schonbeck-Temesy 1969) it has been reported from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Also, according to the Flora U.S.S.R (Komarov 1941), this taxon occurs in Caucasus (W Transcaucasus). Therefore, the Hyrcanian forest in northern Iran and Caucasus are the

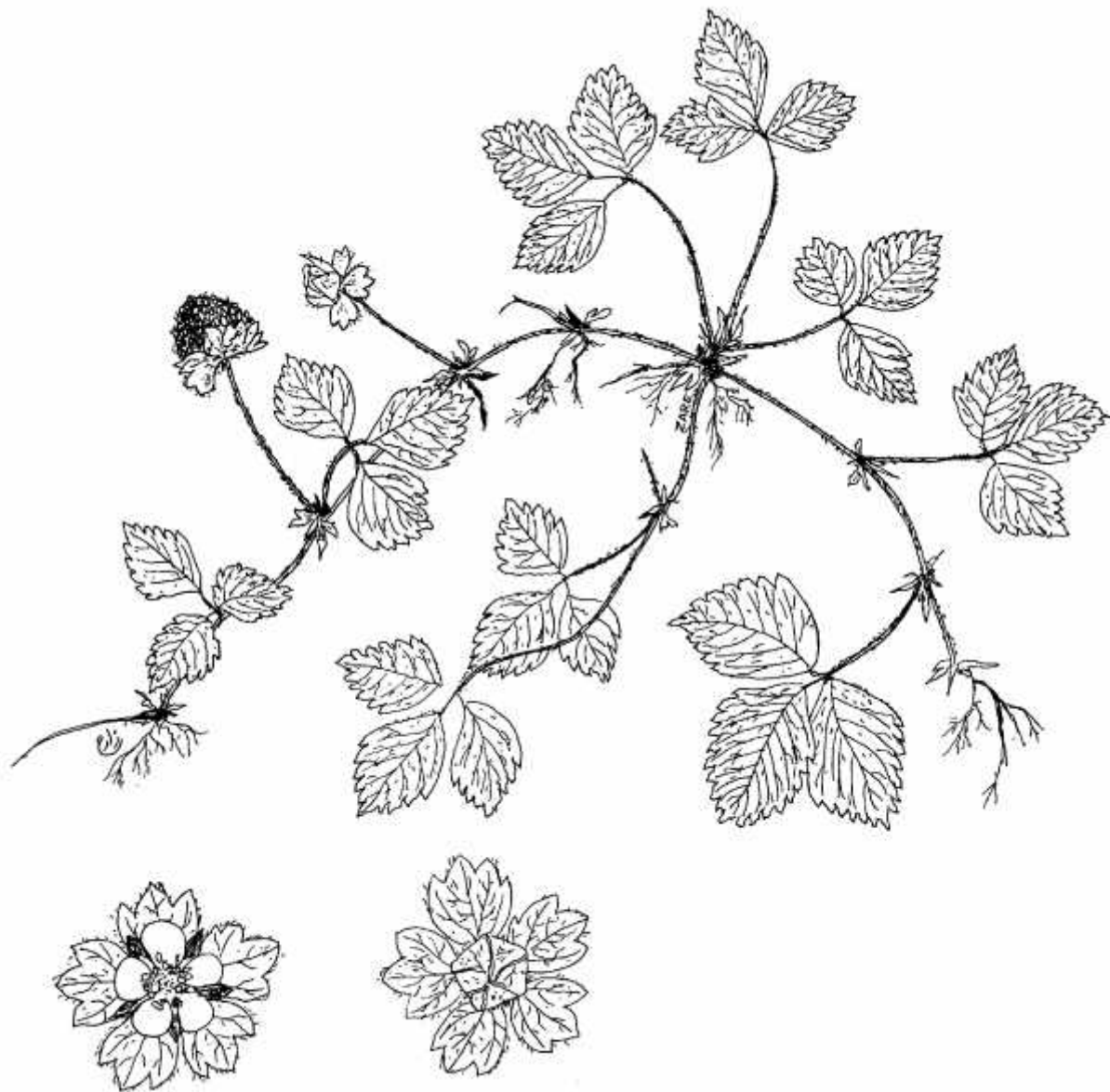


Fig. 1. *Duchesnea indica* (x1); flowers (x3).

westernmost distributional limit of this plant species in Asia; this highlights the importance of this record from the Caspian region. *Duchesnea indica*, probably having the same history of *Diospyros lotus* and *Albizia julibrissin*, as native plants in central Caspian forests and growing in low to mid-altitudes (i.e. 170-930 m a.s.l) of humid forests of Mashalak and lower parts of Veisar forests in southern Nowshahr.

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