

GONTSCHAROVIA POPOVII, A NEW RECORD FOR THE FLORA OF IRAN

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Gontscharovia popovii is recorded for the flora of Iran. It is the first report of the presence of the monotypic genus, *Gontscharovia* in Iran. It is separated from its close ally *Satureja* by the 15-nerved calyx (not 10-13), the glabrous throat of the corolla and the beaked nutlets.

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گزارش جنس *Gontscharovia* برای اولین بار از ایران

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جنس تک گونه‌ای *Gontscharovia* با گونه *G. popovii* برای اولین بار از ایران گزارش می‌شود. این گونه براساس صفات مورفولوژیکی برگها، گل آذین، کاسه گل و فندقه تشخیص داده می‌شود.

Introduction

Gontscharovia is a monotypic genus closely related to widespread *Satureja*. It is a small aromatic shrub to 45 cm. The leaves are linear-oblong to elliptic, densely covered with punctate glands. Its long, slender spike inflorescence consists of 2-6 flowered verticillasters; there is a 15-nerved calyx and the nutlets are c. 1.5 mm long, oblong, and apically attenuate into a short beak.

Among the plants collected from southern Iran in the provinces of Fars and Hormozgan, there were specimens of *G. popovii* (B. Fedtsch. et Gontsch.) Boriss. (Fig. 1). It grows in crevices of limestone rocks and on rocky slopes. It flowers in autumn when little collecting is done. Therefore it may be the reason why it has been overlooked till now.

Geographical distribution

Gontscharovia popovii was previously only known from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir and Tadjikistan (Borissova 1954; Rechinger 1982 and Hedge 1990).

As previously reported (Hedge & Wendelbo 1964) there are links between Central Asian mountain plants and those of the Hindukush and Pamir-Alai. Reviewing the distribution range of *Gontscharovia* also provides evidence for phytogeographical links between the above mentioned areas and southern Iran and shows the disjunct distribution of this species. The previously recorded Afghanistan endemic, *Scutellaria ariana* Hedge, from Hormozgan province, Bokhon Mountain (Mozaffarian, 1988) is another evidence for

phytogeographical links between the two areas.

Specimens studied

Fars, Jahrom, Kuh-e Zireh, 2750 m, Jamzad et al. 85851 TARI; Kuh-e Zireh, 2750 m, Samanian, 85857 TARI; Mian Jangal, protected area, Khavaran, Kuh-e Bare, 1900 m, Mozaffarian 83575 TARI. *Hormozgan*, S. of Hajiabad, Bokhon Mountain, 1600 m, Zaeifi, Asadpour and Khosravifar 6061.

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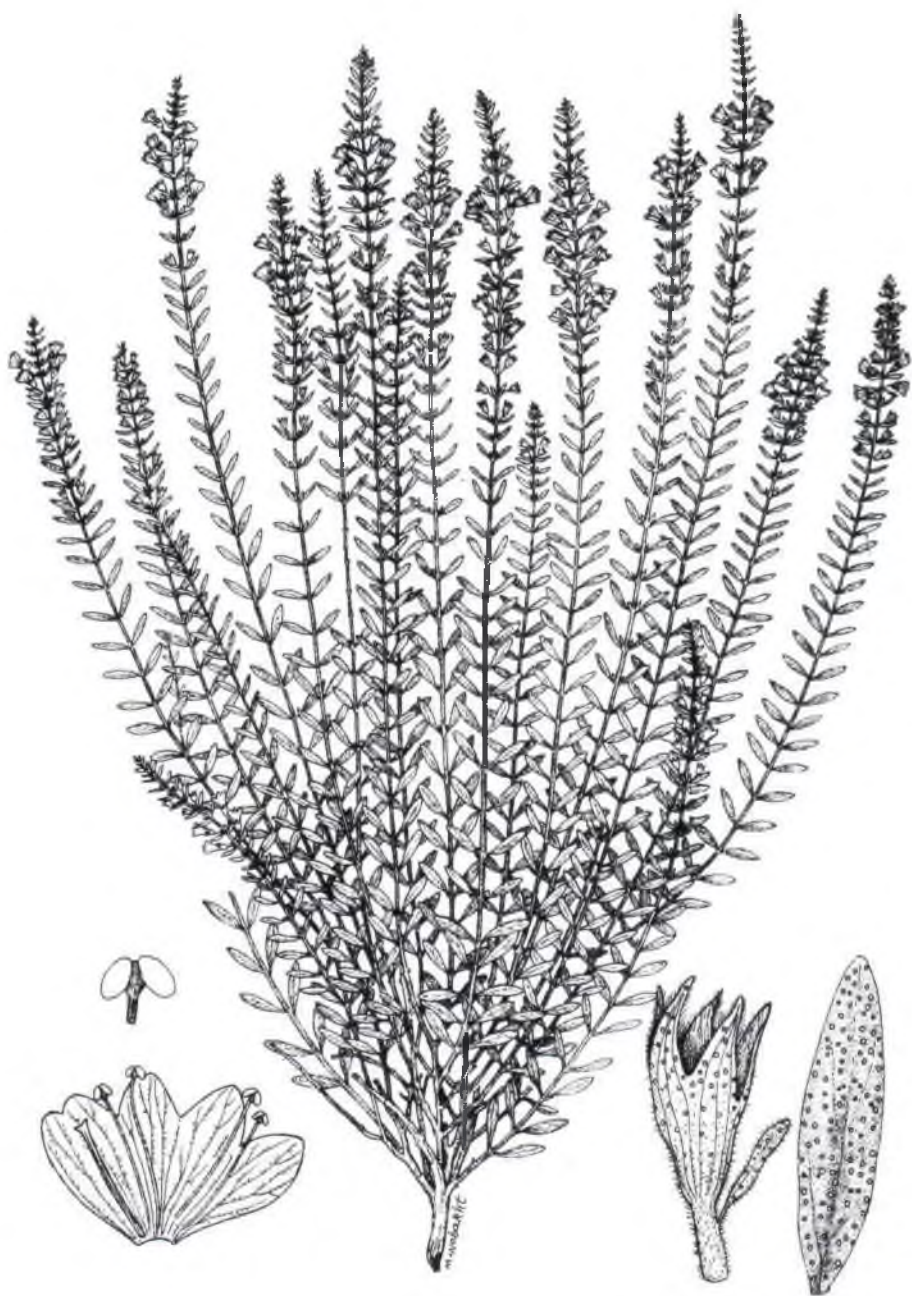


Fig. 1. *Gontscharovia popovii* (x 0.7); corolla (x 4.2); calyx (x 5.6); leaf (x 9).