

# NEW COLLECTION OF RARE SPECIES OF VERONICA IN IRAN

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Two species of *Veronica* i.e. *V. avromanica* and *V. magna* are rare taxa in Iran. New localities are given and the ecology of these species is described. *V. avromanica* is illustrated for the first time.

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جمع آوری جدید گونه های نادر جنس *Veronica* در ایران

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گونه های *Veronica avromanica* و *V. magna* به عنوان گونه های نادری از ایران گزارش می شوند. گونه اولی از درخت زار بازی در گردنه حیران در فاصله بین آستارا و اردبیل جمع آوری گردیده و گونه دومی از نزدیکی دیواندره روی شیب های صخره با پوشش گیاهی تنک جمع آوری شده است.

## Introduction

In the course of a taxonomic revision of the genus *Veronica* in Iran, two species *V. avromanica* M. A. Fischer and *V. magna* M. A. Fischer were distinguished as rare species. According to "Flora Iranica" there is a collection of *V. magna* from Arbustan of Ispili in 1936 by N. Lindsay. Arbustan is a location in prov. Guilan, where named after the plant *Diospyros lotus* locally known as "Arbeh". However this plant is now extinct in this region due to man-made fires, overgrazing and agricultural development. *V. magna* is a sciophyte plant and therefore was not found more in this region due to absence of "Arbeh", which makes the shadow.

*V. avromanica* was reported from an area close to Marivan of prov. Kurdistan by Bentham in several years ago (Fischer 1981). Again, no more collection of this plant has been recorded for this species.

During several excursions in Iran, new specimens for these plants were found. These new materials are deposited in TUH, and the duplicates are in herbaria TARI and LE.

## Ecological remarks

*Veronica magna* was found in a mixed formation of shrubs and grassy patches at the northern border of Azarbaidjan, along a stream and in association with open *Salix* sp., *Crataegus microphylla*, *Lolium perenne* and *Dactylis glomerata*. The new collection of this species is located at Azarbaidjan; Hairan pass; Changhai [48° 33' E, 38° 28' N], altitude 1700 m, 15 vii 2000, Saeidi 24025. An illustration of the plant as whole is given in Flora Iranica (Fischer 1981; tab. 83). This species is an Euro-Siberian element distributed from N Turkey to Caucasia.

Flowering time and fruiting time of this species is July-August. *V. magna* prefers moist and often clay soils. It seems that distribution of this species depends on shade and the requirement for moist condition.

*V. avromanica* (Fig. 1) can be found on limestone slopes with relatively loose plant cover. The new locality of this species is in Kurdistan; Divan-darreh; Saral [46° 50' E, 36° 04' N], altitude 2750 m, 5 vi 1999, Saeidi 24010. This species is an Irano-Turanian element distributed at Iran and Iraq. Flowering time and fruiting time for this species is June-July.

## Taxonomic remarks

*V. avromanica* resembles *V. ferganica* M. Pop. in its distinctly peduncled inflorescence and small seeds which are boat-shape in outline. It differs from *V. ferganica* mainly by its 2-paired leaves with rosette arrangement, its dark blue corolla (not purple), the shape of sepal (linear to lanceolate against ovate or oblong in *V. ferganica*) and longer style (2.2-2.8mm against 0.4-0.5 mm in *V. ferganica*).

The new collection of *V. avromanica* is up to 13 cm tall, while the range of the height size given for this taxon by Fischer (1981) is 4-10 cm.

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## REFERENCE

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Fig. 1. *Veronica avromanica*. -A. Habit ( $\times 2$ ). -B. Flower ( $\times 8$ ). -C. Fruit ( $\times 8$ ).