



Hedysarum persicum (Hedysareae, Leguminosae), a new species from Talesh Mountains, Iran

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Abstract

Hedysarum persicum (Hedysareae, Leguminosae) is described and illustrated as a new species from Talesh Mountains in northwestern Iran. Diagnostic morphological characters useful in discriminating the new species from its close relative *H. cappadocicum* are explained. Some notes are also presented on the ecology, distribution, and conservation status of the new species.

Key words: Aq-Dagh, conservation, Fabaceae, taxonomy

Introduction

Hedysarum Linnaeus (1753:745) with about 200 species is a large genus within the tribe Hedysareae (Leguminosae). Although the main center of diversity is in the Middle Asia (Polhill 1981), this genus is distributed in the temperate to boreal regions of the northern hemisphere (Lock 2005). These plants grow in various habitats, such as alpine and arctic meadows, stony grasslands, deserts, and seashores. Those life forms are perennial herbs, rarely semi-shrubs (Choi & Ohashi 2003). *Hedysarum* has a good contribution in the flora of Iran. In the Flora Iranica 18 species were listed for Iran (Rechinger 1984). After that, about 17 new Iranian taxa have been described and recorded in this genus (Amirahmadi *et al.* 2013). So, with this new species, the number of *Hedysarum* species in Iran increased to 36.

Based on a critical analysis of morphological data, Choi & Ohashi (2003) divided the genus into four sections: *Hedysarum*, *Membranacea* B. Fedtschenko (1902: 229), *Stracheya* (Bentham) B.H. Choi & H. Ohashi (2003: 574), *Multicaulia* (Boissier) B. Fedtschenko (1902: 260). Section *Multicaulia* is divided to three subsections: *Multicaulia* B.H. Choi & H. Ohashi (2003: 574), *Crinifera* (Boiss.) B.H. Choi & H. Ohashi (2003: 574), *Crinifera* (Boissier) B.H. Choi & H. Ohashi (2003: 574), and *Subacaulia* (Boissier). Subsection *Subacaulia* has been distinguished by its acaulescent habit, having undeveloped stem internodes, and radical leaves; flowers on leafless scapes (Fedtschenko 1948). This subsection exists in the flora of Iran with species *Hedysarum renzii* Rechinger (1979: 238), *H. elbursense* Bornmüller & Gauba (1940: 256), *H. papillosum* Boissier (1872: 514), *H. sericeum* M. Bieberstein (1808: 179), *H. plumosum* Boissier & Haussknecht (1872: 514), and *H. monophyllum* Borissova (1947: 81).

Material examined

During vegetation and floristics studies on the alpine and subalpine zones of the Talesh Mountains, we found an unknown species of *Hedysarum*. The specimens were checked with several herbaria (TARI, T, FAR) and with the several floras (Rechinger 1984; Boissier 1872; Fedchenko 1948; Hedge 1970). Further studies revealed that they were not referable to any known taxon of the genus. Therefore, a new species is described here. All characters in the specimens were surveyed by stereomicroscope (Zeiss: Stemi SV 6). The materials recorded here were deposited in T, FAR, and TARI herbaria.