



Article

***Centaurea susannae* (Cardueae, Compositae): A new species from protected coastal areas in Portugal**

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Abstract

Centaurea susannae, a new species from Portugal, is described and illustrated. It belongs to sect. *Seridia* and strongly resembles *C. lusitanica* and *C. sphaerocephala* with both of which it has been confused. It differs from the former in its sessile, auriculate, cauline leaves and its smaller size, and from the latter in its pappose achenes and in shorter spines at the appendage of the middle involucral bracts, usually less than 5 mm long. The present study also reports the chromosome number for this species, i.e. $2n = 22$. *Centaurea susannae* is limited to a few populations in two small regions of the Portuguese coast which lie within protected areas.

Resumen

Se describe e ilustra una nueva especie de Portugal, *Centaurea susannae*. Esta especie pertenece a la sect. *Seridia* y guarda gran parecido con *C. lusitanica* y *C. sphaerocephala* con las que ha sido confundida. De la primera difiere por sus hojas caulinares sésiles, auriculadas, así como su menor porte, y de la segunda porque los aquenios presentan vilano, y por la menor longitud de las espinas del apéndice de las brácteas involucrales medias, por lo general de menos de 5 mm. En este trabajo se da a conocer el número cromosómico de esta especie: $2n = 22$. *Centaurea susannae* se encuentra limitada a unas pocas poblaciones en dos pequeñas regiones de la costa portuguesa, incluidas en espacios protegidos.

Keywords: *Centaurea* sect. *Seridia*, conservation, karyology, taxonomy

Introduction

The genus *Centaurea* Linnaeus (1753: 909) comprises about 250 species (Susanna & Garcia-Jacas 2007), distributed mainly in Europe, the Mediterranean Region, and SW Asia, of which about 90 species (more than 130 taxa including subspecies and varieties) are found in the Iberian Peninsula (Devesa, unpubl. data). In its classical conception, the genus is clearly paraphyletic (Susanna *et al.* 1995, Garcia-Jacas *et al.* 2000), so that its current conception, based on numerous phylogenetic studies of molecular characters (Bremer 1994, Susanna *et al.* 1995, Garcia-Jacas *et al.* 2000, 2001), has involved profound restructuring (*vide* López & Devesa 2008a) including the choice of *C. paniculata* Linnaeus (1753: 912) as the new type of the genus (Greuter *et al.* 2001).

The section *Seridia* (Jussieu 1789: 173) Candolle (1838: 598) includes annuals and perennials, with upper cauline leaves often decurrent, and the appendage of the middle involucral bracts with spines in clusters of three or more in a palmate arrangement (Dostál 1976). All the species have the *Jacea* type pollen (according to Wagenitz 1955), and phylogenetic studies place them in the *Jacea* clade (Garcia-Jacas *et al.* 2000) and,