
Androcymbium rechingeri* Greuter*LILIACEAE****Endangered**

Status

Endangered. It occurs on the west facing coasts of NW Kriti, and also sporadically on the adjacent island of Elafonisos.

Description

Corn single. Stem 2-7 cm long. Leaves 2-15 cm long, linear to lanceolate, glabrous. Flowers 1-6(-12), shortly pedicellate; perianth segments (including claw) 20-25 mm long; limb lanceolate, acute, 3-4(-6) mm broad, white with pinkish veins. Filaments 4-5 mm long; anthers 1-1.8(-2) mm long. Fruit 6-10 mm long, obpyriform, occasionally glandular-punctate only at the apex. Seeds subspherical, granulate. Flowering January to February.

Distribution

Endemic. *Androcymbium rechingeri* is known only from the small island of Elafonisos and the opposite west facing coasts of NW Kriti (Turland & al. 1993), these two localities being the only sites of occurrence of this species in Europe. Its synonymy with *A. gramineum* var. *panicum* (Malre) Malre from N Africa is considered doubtful (Greuter 1976).

Habitat and ecology

It grows in maritime sands and sandy soil-pockets in phrygana, from sea level to 25 m alt.

Conservation measures taken

None at present.

Conservation measures proposed

Androcymbium rechingeri seems to be strictly adapted to a very specialized habitat. Thus, the only way of conserving the species would be by protecting its habitats on a local scale and, obvi-

ously, by preventing its collection. However, the best method of protection would be to establish Elafonisos islet, where other endemic species also occur, as a legally protected area.

Biology and potential value

This species is the only representative of the genus *Androcymbium* in Greece. It is noteworthy that the other site of occurrence of this genus in Europe is in southern Spain. *A. rechingeri* highlights the phytogeographic links between Kriti and Cyrenaica.

References

- Greuter, W. 1967: *Contributions floristicae austro-aegyptiae* 10-12. - *Cardellina* 22(2): 233-253.
Turland, N.J., Chilton, L., & Press, J.R. 1993: *Flora of the Cretan Area: Annotated Checklist and Atlas*. The Natural History Museum, H.M.S.O., London.

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Photo: R. Jahn

