

A New Genus (*Mericaepaea* Boiss.) Record From Turkey

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Abstract: *Mericaepaea ciliata* (Banks & Sol.) Eig (*Rubiaceae*) is recorded from Turkey for the first time. It is also new genus record (*Mericaepaea* Boiss.) for Turkey.

Key Words: New genus, Record, Flora, Turkey.

Türkiye'den Yeni Bir (*Mericaepaea* Boiss.) Cins Kaydı

Özet: *Mericaepaea ciliata* (Banks. & Sol.) Eig Türkiye'den ilk defa kaydedilmektedir. Bu, aynı zamanda yeni bir cins (*Mericaepaea* Boiss.) kayıdır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yeni cins, Kayıt, Flora, Türkiye.

The family *Rubiaceae* is represented by ten genera in Turkey (1). These are *Oldenlandia* L., *Putoria* Pers., *Sherarida* L., *Crucianella* L., *Asperula* L., *Galium* L., *Callipeltis* Steven, *Cruciata* Miller, *Valantia* L. and *Rubia* L. There is a short note about the genus *Mericaepaea* in the Flora of Turkey. According to the Flora of Turkey the *Mericaepaea ciliata* was collected for the first time by Mouterde from south-east Anatolia (2). But the specimens have not been seen by the author who wrote *Mericaepaea* account in the Flora of Turkey, so he was doubtful, if it grows in Turkey. According to the Flora of Iraq, (3) the plant might occur in Iraq, but occurrence is unknown and no collection is seen either. It is only known from Aucher-Eloy's specimen (*Aucher-Eloy* 670) from Mesopotamia (4).

The specimens was collected from the Ceylanpınar district of the province of Şanlıurfa near the Syrian border during the "In-situ Conservation of Genetic Biodiversity of Turkey (GEF Grand 28632)" project supported by the World Bank. *Mericaepaea ciliata* is described and illustrated again because there is not enough information about it.

Mericaepaea ciliata (Bank & Sol.) Eig in Journ. Bot. 75: 190 (1937). Fig. and map.

Caespitose, annual, 4-8 cm, branched from the base, with prostrate to ascending, quadrangular, retrorsely scabrid stems. Leaves in whorls of up to 6, narrowly oblanceolate 4-7 x 0.8-1 mm, rather obtuse, antrorsely

denticulate-scabrous on the revolute margins and the midrib. Cymes axillary, nearly sessile, 1-3-flowered; central pedicel absent, lateral 1-1.7 mm. Calyx limb obsolete. Corolla rotate, yellow, 1-1.5 mm in diameter, with oblong, acute lobes. Style 2-lobed, stigma capitate. Mericarps 2, oblong, 3-4 mm, with 5-7-toothed crests; teeth triangular at base, prickly-hooked at apex.

Fl. March-April. On calcareous rocky places.

Location: C7 Şanlıurfa; Ceylanpınar, around Hırvatus, stony ground 430-450 m, 11. iv. 1995, Z. Aytaç & N. Adigüzel (1874).

Distribution: Turkey, Palestine, Syria and Iraq. Irano-Turanian elements.

The specimens are deposited at GAZI, ANK HUB and Yıldırımli herbaria.

Recommended IUCN Threat Category is Vulnerable (VU), because it has a very poor population in the area.

Mericaepaea is a monotypic genus. It is similar to annual species of *Galium*, but the fruit has ciliate mericarps. On the other hand the fruit is also similar to *Umbelliferae*, but the leaves are verticillate and the cymes are 1-3-flowered, not umbellate.

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