

4.1 = TAXONOMIC, ECOLOGICAL AND CHOROLOGICAL REMARKS ON *CLINOPODIUM MINAE* (LAMIACEAE), CRITICAL AND RARE PLANT OF THE SICILIAN FLORA

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In a previous contribution (1) the finding in the wild of *Clinopodium minae* (Lojac.) Peruzzi & F.Conti [Bas. *Calamintha minae* Lojac.], a critical species close to *Clinopodium corsicum* (Pers.) Govaerts and well distinct from *Clinopodium alpinum* (L.) Kuntze subsp. *nebrodense* (A.Kern. & Strobl) Bartolucci & F.Conti was reported. It is a critical taxon, described by Lojacono, author of the most extensive work on the Sicilian flora (2) based on the examination of the collections of the Herbarium of Palermo (PAL!) (3). In the above cited note, the specific characters as well as the taxonomic relationships with other taxa were highlighted. At the same time, the location of a small population of *C. minae* on the northern slopes of the calcareous system of the Carbonara, the highest mountain of the Madonie (N Sicily), was reported.

Starting from this first population, field surveys have been extended to other localities of the Madonie. These have also enabled us to find *C. minae* also on the western slopes of Monte Quacella that, named the "Sicilian Alps" by the same Lojacono, is the richest area in mostly endemic plant species, with respect to Sicily (4).

In this context, *C. minae* occurs on consolidated dolomite debris, in semi-shaded places, from 1450 to 1700 m, at margins of larger communities at *Juniperus communis* subsp. *hemisphaerica* (J.Presl & C.Presl) Arcang. and *Daphne oleoides* Schreb., together with *Odontarrhena nebrodensis* (Tineo) L. Cecchi & Selvi subsp. *nebrodensis*, *Clinopodium alpinum* subsp. *nebrodense*, *Anthemis arvensis* subsp. *sphacelata* (C.Presl) R.Fern., *Carlina nebrodensis* DC., *Centaurea parlatoris* Heldr., *Helianthemum cinereum* subsp. *rotundifolium* (Dunal) Greuter & Burdet, *H. oelandicum* subsp. *incanum* (Willk.) G.López, *Hypochoeris radicata* L., *Jurinea bocconei* Guss., *Laserpitium siler* subsp. *siculum* (Spreng.) Santangelo, F.Conti & Gubellini, *Linum punctatum* C.Presl, *Onosma echioides* subsp. *canescens* (C.Presl) Peruzzi & N.G. Passal., *Paeonia mascula* (L.) Mill., *Pilosella hoppeana* subsp. *sicula* Di Grist., Gottschl. & Raimondo, *Pimpinella tragiium* subsp. *lithophila* (Schischk.) Tutin, *Orchis anthropophora* (L.) All., *Sesleria nitida* subsp. *sicula* Brullo & Giusso, *Silene italica* subsp. *sicula* (Ucria) Jeanm., *Teucrium montanum* L., *Thymus striatus* Vahl, and some grasses.

Compared with the plants from the Carbonara Mount, the population of Quacella is much richer in individuals and shows an accentuated variability, not remarked in the taxonomic analysis by Lojacono.

At present, however, based on the recently collected materials, *C. minae* occurs on both calcareous and dolomite substrates, above 1,450 m a.s.l. Based on the collections by A. Todaro housed in PAL! and in the course of field surveys, the authors do not exclude the possible occurrence of *C. minae* in other carbonatic reliefs in the province of Palermo.

1) V. Spadaro, P. Mazzola, F.M. Raimondo (2010) Atti 105° Congresso S.B.I., Milano, 25-28 Agosto 2010, 151

2) M. Lojacono-Pojero (1888-1909) Flora sicula. Palermo

3) G. Domina, W. Greuter, P. Mazzola, F.M. Raimondo (2014) Fl. Medit., 24, 215-232

4) M. Lojacono-Pojero (1905) Alpi siciliane. Sicula. Palermo, 10 (6), 14-37