

MICROMERIA BROWICZII (LABIATAE), AN UNUSUAL NEW SPECIES FROM ZAKINTHOS (IONIAN ISLANDS, GREECE)*

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Abstract: *Micromeria browiczii*, sp. nov. belonging to *Micromeria* Benth. sect. *Micromeria*, is described as a species new to science. It occurs near coastal cliffs on Zakynthos, the Ionian island nearest the Peloponnese in southern Greece. It is a morphologically well-defined species, distinguishable by its neat revolute leaves and dense greyish indumentum.

Key words: *Micromeria*, new species, Zakynthos, Ionian Islands, Greece

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During fieldwork in 1988 to investigate the woody flora of Zakynthos (Boratyński *et al.* 1990), an unusual *Micromeria* was collected in the southern part of the island, between Agalas and the promontory of Kentinaria. It was growing on a rocky, calcareous, sunny slope, with *terra rossa* in soil pockets and crevices, not far from the coastal cliffs, at an altitude of c. 100 m. Associated species in the degraded phrygana include *Cistus creticus* L., *C. parviflorus* Lam., *C. salviifolius* L., *Erica manipuliflora* Salisb., *Hypericum empetrifolium* Willd., *Salvia fruticosa* Miller and *Satureja thymbra* L. This part of the island is not well-boatized. There were many interesting chasmophytes on the cliffs including the Greek endemic *Dianthus fruticosus* L. subsp. *occidentalis* Runem., but in the *Flora Hellenica* database only two records of its occurrence on Zakynthos, viz., one by Boratyński *et al.* (1991) and another by Anagnostopoulos and Athanasiou (1994) were found. The *Micromeria* population contained several hundred plants, arrestingly conspicuous on account of their neat dwarf stature and dense grey indumentum. These plants bore a superficial resemblance to *M. cristata* (Hampe) Griseb., a poly-

morphic species with several infraspecific taxa distributed in the Balkans and Anatolia, especially with regard to the few-flowered inflorescences. However, careful examination showed that the plants from Zakynthos could not at all be treated as an unusual form of *M. cristata* as they differ in several major characters. We concluded, therefore, that they represent an undescribed species. The authors take pleasure in dedicating this new taxon to Professor Kazimierz Browicz, distinguished dendrologist at the Polish Academy of Sciences, Kórnik, specialist on trees and shrubs of the East Mediterranean region, esteemed friend and colleague. Professor Kazimierz Browicz had also organized the excursion and co-ordinated the field studies on Zakynthos in 1988.

Micromeria browiczii Zieliński & Kit Tan, sp. nov.

Fig. 1.

Suffrutex 10–15 cm altus, basi ramosissimus, paulo aromaticus. Rami erecti et ascendentes, subrigidi, dense patente pubescentes, incani. Internodii 3–5 mm longi. Folia 4.0–5.5 mm longa, recta vel subpatentia, brevissime petiolata, utrinque dense pubescentia, incana, ovata, (anguste) ovato-elliptica, basi rotundata vel anguste rotundata, apice obtusa, margine integra, manifeste revoluta, nervis medianis distincte prominentibus. Inflorescentia 3–5 cm longa. Verticillastri plerumque ± approximati. Cymae 1–3-florae, breviter pe-

* Dedicated to Professor Kazimierz Browicz on the occasion of his 75th birthday in December 2000.

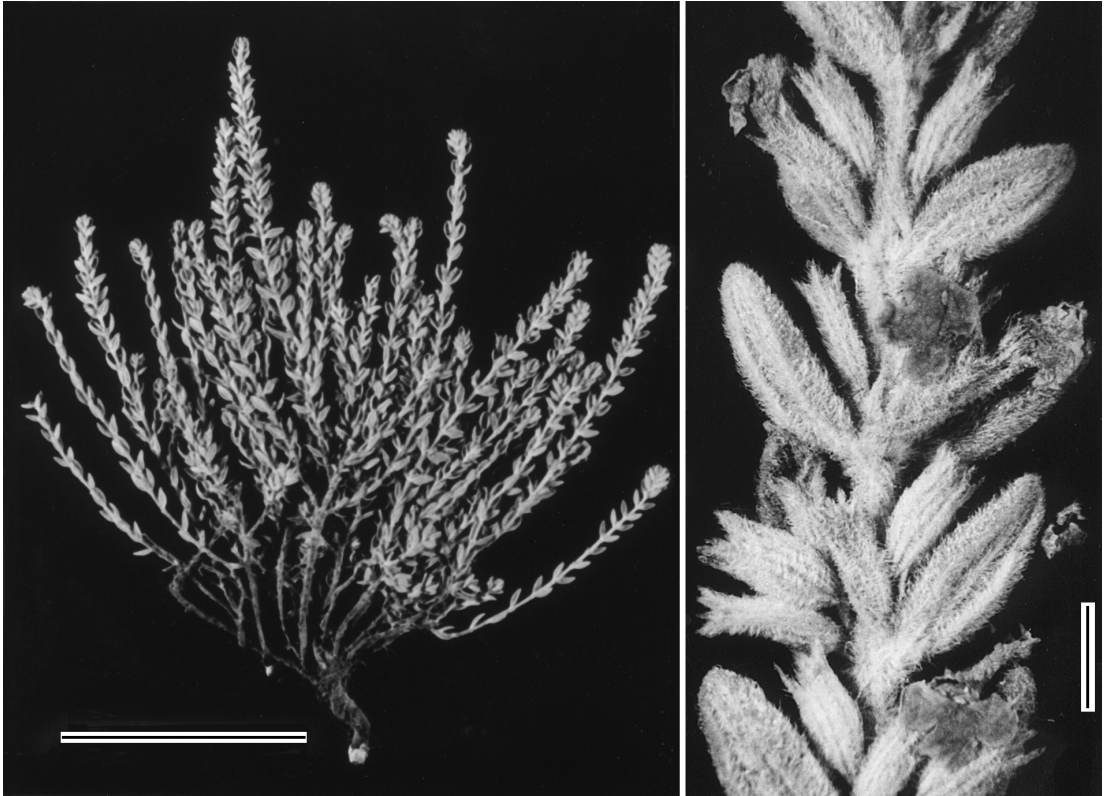


Fig. 1. *Micromeria browiczii* Zieliński & Kit Tan, sp. nov. (A. Boratyński, K. Browicz, A. Tomlik & J. Zieliński 765, KOR); scale bar = 5 cm. Fragment of the inflorescence on the left; scale bar = 2 mm.

dunculatae, folia paulo superantes. Pedicelli usque 0.75 mm longi. Bracteae subulatae pedicellos superantes. Calyx (2.0–)2.5–3.5 cm longus, tubulosus, manifeste nervosus, dense patente pubescens, fauce intus pilosus, fructifer paulo inflatus; dentes subequales, subulati vel anguste triangulati, tertiam circiter partem calycis longitudinis attingentes. Corolla rosea, usque 4.0(–4.5) mm longa, extus breviter tomentella, labium superius retusum, inferius trilobum. Nux oblongo-ellipsoidea, 1 mm longa, 0.6 mm lata, brunnea, apice obtusa vel roundata.

Suffruticose, perennial 10–15 cm tall, slightly aromatic, densely greyish-hairy throughout and with numerous, minute, shining, shortly stalked glands, scarcely visible through dense indumentum. Flowering stems numerous, erect, ascending, rather rigid, densely patent-hairy, lacking resting buds at base. Internodes 3–5 mm long, equalling

or shorter than leaves. Leaves sessile, ovate to narrowly elliptic-ovate, 4.0–5.5 mm long, rounded at base, obtuse at apex, entire, strongly revolute, densely hairy on both surfaces, with prominent mid-vein beneath; lateral veins hidden. Inflorescence 3–5 cm long. Bracts leaf-like, not differentiated from each other. Verticillasters approximate. Cymules 1–3-flowered, very shortly pedunculate, \pm subequalling subtending leaves. Bracteoles subulate, exceeding pedicels. Flowers sessile or on short pedicels up to 0.75 mm long. Calyx tubular, (2.0–) 2.5–3.0 mm long, subactinomorphic, with 13 prominent veins, patent-hairy, bearded at throat, slightly inflated in fruit, with few large sessile glands between veins; teeth narrowly triangular to subulate, *ca* 1/3 as long as calyx, erect to subpatent. Corolla pink, 4.0–4.5

mm long, hairy outside; upper lip emarginate, lower lip distinctly 3-lobed. Nutlets ellipsoid-oblong, ca 1.0×0.6 mm, obtuse or rounded at apex, brown.

TYPE: GREECE, IONIAN ISLANDS. Nomos and eparchia of Zakynthou: Zakynthos, between Agalas and the promontory of Kentinaria, calcareous rocky slope, ca 100 m, 25 May 1988, A. Boratyński, K. Browicz, A. Tomlik & J. Zieliński 765 (HOLOTYPE: KOR; ISOTYPES: ATH, herb. Kit Tan).

DISTRIBUTION. Endemic to Greece; known at present only from the Ionian island of Zakynthos. Flowering in May.

NOTE. The new taxon is distinct on account of its dense grey indumentum, small, strongly revolute leaves, few-flowered, subsessile cymules and obtusely rounded nutlets. It is related to *M. cristata* (Hampe) Griseb. and less closely to *M. cremnophila* Boiss. & Heldr.; the latter occurs in Greece, Albania, Anatolia and Lebanon and differs by its slender, flexuous flowering stems, less dense indumentum, shorter bracteoles and subacuminate

nutlets. The former can be distinguished by the characteristic short, hairy, imbricate leaves resting buds at the base of the flowering stems, much less hairy stems and leaves, distinctly pedunculate cymules, longer pedicels and acuminate nutlets.

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