

ERIGERON KARVINSKIANUS DC. AND
LINARIO-ERIGERONETUM MUCRONATI SEGAL 1969,
NEW PLANT AND ASSOCIATION IN CROATIA

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American plant species *Erigeron karvinskianus* DC. was recorded on the walls of the city of Dubrovnik, South Croatia, in April 2013. It is found within the *Linario-Erigeronnetum mucronati* Segal 1969 plant association (the class *Parietarietea judaicae* Oberdorfer 1977). Plant species and association have been recorded outside cultivation for the first time in Croatia.

Keywords: *Erigeron karvinskianus*, *Linario-Erigeronnetum mucronati*, first record, city of Dubrovnik, Croatia

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U travnju 2013. u Dubrovniku je otkrivena američka vrsta *Erigeron karvinskianus* DC. Naseljava pukotine zidova u asocijaciji *Linario-Erigeronnetum mucronati* Segal 1969 (razred *Parietarietea judaicae* Oberdorfer 1977). To je prvi nalaz te vrste u prirodi te nova biljna asocijacija u Hrvatskoj.

Ključne riječi: *Erigeron karvinskianus*, *Linario-Erigeronnetum mucronati*, prvi nalaz, Dubrovnik, Hrvatska

INTRODUCTION

During floristic investigations in the city of Dubrovnik (South Croatia) and its surroundings, *Erigeron karvinskianus* DC. (Latin American fleabane) was found for the first time in Croatia in April 2013. The taxon was found on the walls in the inner suburban area. In this paper, the finding of the new species is reported and its syntaxonomic status is discussed.

The genus *Erigeron* (subtribe Conyzinae, family Asteraceae, superorder Asteranae) has about 400 species distributed in the Americas, Asia, Europe, and a few in Africa and Australia. In fact, *Erigeron* is the only genus of Conyzinae with species native to regions outside the Americas. The summary of NESOM (2008) presented an outline classification of New World *Erigeron* species, recognizing 35 sections. In these terms, *E. karvinskianus* belongs to the section *Karvinskia* (NESOM, 1989). The native range of this section is re-

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stricted to Central America, from Southern Mexico to Panama. An apomictic species, Latin American fleabane has become a worldwide weed in tropical and subtropical latitudes, having escaped from horticulture (HEGL, 1979; NESOM, 2008; CULLEN, 2011).

According to Flora Europaea (HALLIDAY, 1976), *E. karvinskianus* is reported from the Archipelago of the Azores and Portugal, the Balearic Islands and Spain, Great Britain (excluding the Channel Islands and Northern Ireland), France (excluding Corsica), Switzerland and Italy. According to GREUTER (2006–2009), it occurs all over Western Europe, as well as in Algeria (North Africa). More recently, it was found in Austria (STÖHR *et al.*, 2009). In Europe, the species has been categorized as i) introduced and naturalised alien; ii) introduced and adventitious (casual alien); or iii) cultivated plant (GREUTER, 2006–2009).

Tab. 1. *Linario-Erigeronetum mucronati* Segal 1969.

No of relevés	1	2
Slope (°)	90	90
Aspect	S	S
Vascular plant cover (%)	20	20
Plot size (m ²)	6	5
No of species	12	11
Char. Ass.		
<i>Erigeron karvinskianus</i> DC.	2	2
Char. Parietaron judaicae & Parietarietea judaicae		
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> Gaertner, Meyer et Schreb.	1	1
<i>Parietaria judaica</i> L.	+	1
<i>Asplenium ceterach</i> L.	+	+
<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i> (Salisb.) Dandy	+	+
<i>Theligionum cynocrambe</i> L.	1	+
<i>Reichardia picroides</i> (L.) Roth	+	+
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i> L.	+	.
<i>Antirrhinum majus</i> L.	.	+
<i>Sedum dasyphyllum</i> L.	.	+
<i>Ficus carica</i> L.	.	+
Other species		
<i>Helichrysum italicum</i> (Roth) G.Don	+	.
<i>Hedera helix</i> L.	+	.
<i>Bituminaria bituminosa</i> (L.) Stirton	+	.
<i>Reseda alba</i> L.	+	.
<i>Micromeria juliana</i> (L.) Benth. ex Rchb.	.	+

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Two phytocoenological relevés (Tab. 1) were collected using the BRAUN-BLANQUET (1964) approach. The nomenclature of syntaxonomic units follows BRULLO & GUARINO (1998), the nomenclature of plants in accordance with TUTIN *et al.* (1964-1980, 1993). Data on the localities of relevés (Tab. 1) are as follows: rels. 1 & 2, city of Dubrovnik, Lapad Peninsula, the Gauss-Krüger coordinates X=5753500, Y=4727335, using mobile application *mBotaničar* (NIKOLIĆ *et al.*, 2012); Date: April 11, 2013. Herbarium specimens are housed in the University of Zagreb, *Herbarium Croaticum* (ZA!); Leg. et det. N. Jasprica.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We found *Erigeron karvinskianus* DC. (= *E. mucronatus* DC.) on the walls of the city of Dubrovnik, on April 11, 2013 (Fig. 1). The population is very small, occupying only 3-4 m², at 60 m a.s.l. Generally, populations of Latin American fleabane develop between sea level and 600 (-700) m a.s.l. (PIGNATTI, 1982; CHEN *et al.*, 2011).

Erigeron karvinskianus was found within the *Linario-Erigeronietum mucronati* Segal 1969 plant association (Tab. 1).

Syntaxonomic position of the association is as follows:

Parietarietea judaicae Oberdorfer 1977

Tortulo-Cymbalarietalia Segal 1969

Parietarion judaicae Segal 1969

Linario-Erigeronietum mucronati Segal 1969

The association appeared on southern exposures, and the cover was low. There were 11 to 12 species in the relevés.

A differentiating species of the *Linario-Erigeronietum mucronati* association is *Erigeron karvinskianus*. In fact, this community represents mesophilous vegetation linked to cement or mortar-jointed walls, growing in only slightly humified narrow crevices. According to BRULLO & GUARINO (1998), the association is distributed in Mediterranean and Atlantic Europe. In our case, as in Western Europe, the association is encountered on a south-facing wall. However, in the Mediterranean area it does not show a pronounced preference for a particular type of exposure (BRULLO & GUARINO, 1998). In our study, the floral composition of the association was similar to those in Spain, Italy and Switzerland (HRUSKA, 1985; BRANDES, 1989, 1992; HERRERA GALLASTEGUI, 1995), and in other parts of Europe (BRULLO & GUARINO, 1998, and references therein). The association has some floristic and ecological similarities with the *Linario cymbalariae-Parietarietum ramiflorae* Pignatti 1952 association identified by TRINAJSTIĆ (2010) on the Croatian coast and islands. Regarding syntaxonomy, we agree with ŚWIERKOSZ (2012) that the floristic composition of the association is closer to the Mediterranean *Parietarion* communities than to the Central-European *Cymbalario-Asplenion* Segal 1969 (cf. POLDINI & VIDALI, 1994).

In general, plants that have escaped garden-cultivation and occupy city wall, are of special interests to urban ecologists (BRANDES, 1995). It has been reported that the walls in Europe are easily colonized by adventitious species, like *Erigeron karvinskianus* or *Cheiranthus cheiri* L. (BRANDES, 1992). These species became spontaneous and flourish exclusively on walls, subsequently becoming anthropochorous in large areas of Europe. It seems that walls are suitable sites, much more so than the rock crevices. These species,



Fig. 1. *Erigeron karvinskianus* DC. in the wall crevices of the city of Dubrovnik, South Croatia (photo N. Jasprica).

as well as some others (e.g. *Antirrhinum majus* L., *Parietaria judaica* L., *Umbilicus rupestris* (Salisb.) Dandy, *Cymbalaria muralis* Gaertner, Meyer et Schreb.), show a distinct pattern of migration along the valleys of the great European rivers and their tributaries and along the Western coasts of Europe, as shown by the density and the richness of their growing sites in these areas (CUFODONTIS, 1947; MENNEMA & SEGAL, 1967; SEGAL, 1969).

According to the available literature, this is the first record of the Latin American fleabane in the Balkans and South-Eastern Europe. This finding contributes to the knowledge of the chorology and ecology of *E. karvinskianus*, the floristic and vegetation richness of Croatia, but also emphasizes the further spreading of plant-newcomers to the suitable habitats.

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