

# Project partner: Mediterranean Plant Conservation Unit, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania

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## Island

CRETE

## Species name (Family)

*Androcymbium rechingeri* Greuter (Colchicaceae)

## Common name

No common name.

## Plant description

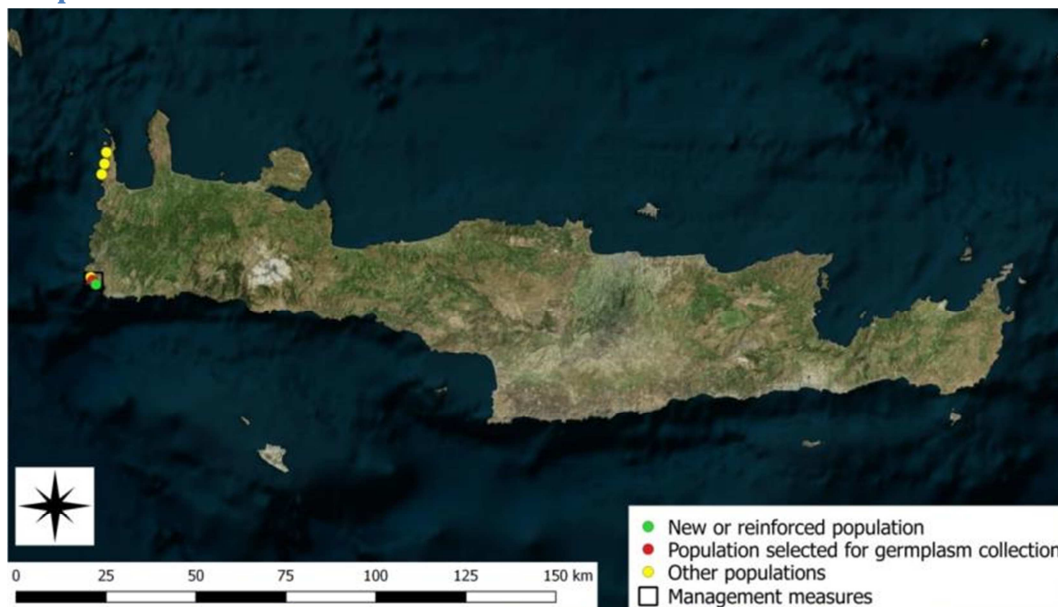
- ✓ Corn tuberos, slender, with coriaceous tunics. Stem very short, underground. Leaves several, narrowly lanceolate, spreading, ± curved, forming a flat rosette, glossy green. Flowers white with pinkish veins, usually 5–10 in a dense cluster.
- ✓ Life form: Geophyte; flowering: December-February; fruiting: May-June; dispersal strategy: The whole above ground of the plant dries up and gets rolled around by the wind, releasing seeds along the way.
- ✓ The species grows in coastal phrygana on shallow sandy soil on calcareous substrate, but not on moving sands, 0-50 m.

## Distribution

Crete – Coastal areas of N Africa from Tunisia to NW Egypt (Strid 2016).

Locally abundant on the islet of Elaphonisi SW Crete, where it was first discovered in 1962, subsequently found in 3 other localities in W Crete.

## Map



## Legal status

*Androcymbium rechingeri* is listed as priority species on Annex II of the Habitats Directive and under Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention). The species is also protected by the Greek Presidential Decree 67/81.

## Main threats and conservation status

The main threats are recreational activities and tourism, overgrazing, agricultural activities and construction of roads.

Threat categories according to IUCN classification scheme, version 3.2:

- ✓ 1.3 Tourism and recreation areas
- ✓ 2.1 Annual & Perennial Non-Timber Crops - 2.1.3 Agro-industry Farming

- ✓ 2.3 Livestock farming & ranching - 2.3.1 Nomadic grazing
- ✓ 6.1 Recreational activities

It is included in the Red Data Book of Greece as Endangered (Phitos et al. 1995). The species is characterized as Endangered (EN), according to criteria B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii) (IUCN 2001) (Delipetrou 2011).

### Conservation actions carried out in the CARE-MEDIFLORA project

The selected actions for this target species population in Elafonisi include *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation. Seed collections were made during May of 2016 from the wild population. Part of this accession is kept in the seed bank of MAICH (*ex situ* conservation).

The remaining seedlot was used for *in situ* conservation actions, namely the reinforcement of the natural population. Seeds were either used to produce seedlings to be planted on the selected sites, or were sown directly in the soil. Other management measures included placement of protective structures designed to protect the plants from trampling, fencing and placement of information signs.

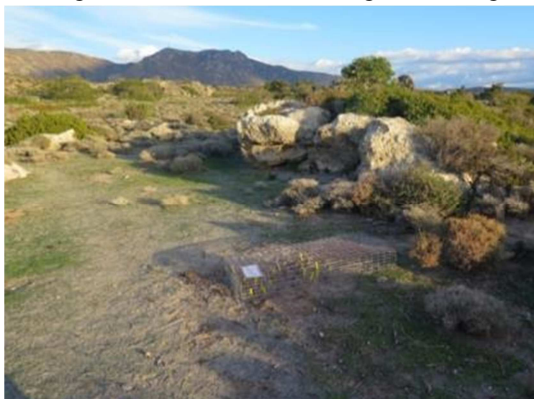
### Photos



*Androcymbium rechingeri* in flowering



Metal grid stabilization & Planting of seedlings within fenced area



Reinforcement actions outside fenced area & View of protective structure