Plants from the Turda Area Included in the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ Herbarium

Vlad CRISAN* and Lucian DINCA

‘Marin Drăcea’ National Institute for Research and Development in Forestry, 13 Closca St, 500040, Brașov, Romania
*Corresponding author: Vlad CRISAN e-mail: vlad_crsn@yahoo.com

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abstract
The paper aims to present the plants collected from the former county of Turda and their characteristics, that are found in one of the most important herbariums in Romania - the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium of the ‘Marin Drăcea’ National Institute for Research and Development in Forestry. The article presents the studied material, the number of vouchers with species harvested from this region, as well as some characteristics of this large collection of plants, such as the period when the collection was constituted and the periods of plant harvesting. For the studied herbarium, the genera were systematized, as the most representative genera were highlighted. Not only the most important species collected from the Turda County are indicated but, at the same time, the specialists who left their mark on the grassland representation in this area were also mentioned.

Keywords: flora; ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium; Turda.

INTRODUCTION
The former Turda County covered 3,158 km² and was located in western part of Romania, in the western part of Transylvania on the Aries river valley. It was bordered by Cluj County to the north; the counties of Bihor and Arad to the west; the counties of Hunedoara and Alba to the south and the counties of Târnava Mică and Mureș to the east. Nowadays, the territory that comprised the greater part of Turda County is integrated in Cluj, Mureș and Alba counties (Figure 1). In the former Turda County we find the Bihor Mountains which still include forests of fir and spruce high in the mountains, and dense beech forests, below. Also, there are beautiful oak forests at the contact between the mountains and the plateau, on the higher hills. The ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium was established in 1929. It is registered in the Index Herbariorum with the international BUCF code and contains approximately 40,000 plates (Vechiu and Dincă, 2019; Dincă et al., 2017). This herbarium is owned by the ‘Marin Drăcea’ National Institute for Research and Development in Forestry, Bucharest and comprises a multitude of plants belonging to many genera, such as: 42 species of Alnus genus (Dincă and Peticilă, 2019), 80 species of Trifolium genus (Cântar and Dincă, 2018), 17 species of Amaranthus genus (Dincă et al., 2018), 11 species of Elymus genus (Pleșca et al., 2019), 19 species of Centaurea genus (Dincă et al., 2017), 21 species of Agrostis genus (Cântar and Dincă, 2019), 36 species of Bromus genus (Tudor and Dincă, 2019), 7 species of Lycopodium genus (Vechiu et al., 2018) and 58 species of Cornus genus (Vechiu and Dincă, 2019). The plants were collected from various areas of the country, such as the former Vlășca county (Ciontu and Dincă, 2019) or from the Bazoș park in Timisoara (Chisăliță et al., 2017).
MATERIALS AND METHODS

The database was created by researchers of the ‘Marin Dracea’ National Institute for Research and Development in Forestry (NIRDF) in order to update and present this valuable collection. It is a process in progress due to the high number of vouchers and the amount of time needed to complete the database. The vouchers are very fragile and each one must be handled very carefully.

We consider that this information is important and it must be known by other specialists and researchers from Romania or worldwide.

The article is based on material which consists of a number of 272 vouchers belonging to different genera in the studied area of Turda. The database was created using information written on the identification label of each voucher. Thus, the following data were taken from the labels: drawer number, voucher number, scientific name of the plant, name of the collection it belongs to, date of collection, place of collection, name of the collector and/or name of the person who identified the plant. Based on the fact that the methodology of creating the database involved the completion of each voucher, another characteristic of the database was added, namely the degree of preservation of each specimen (Table 1). Thus, a grade was given on a scale from 1 to 4 depending on the preservation quality as follows: 1 for the whole plant correctly attached to the plate and well preserved, 2 for the plant detached from the plate with existing but detached parts, 3 for the detached plant of the plant with missing parts and 4 for the detached and fragmented plant with over 50% of its components missing. Subsequently, it was verified that the scientific name is accepted internationally and it was updated according to The Plant List (http://www.theplantlist.org).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As a result of the analysis of the plates of the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium and their systematization, 272 plates containing plants collected from the locality and the former Turda County, belonging to a number of over 100 genera, could be identified. The genera with the most representative plants collected in this area, which are found in the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium are: Polygonum (18 specimens of 12 species), Bromus (15 specimens belonging to 7 species), Galium (13 specimens of 10 species), Trifolium (11 specimens of 10 species) and Artemisia (10 specimens of 7 species). An extract regarding the systematization of the plates containing plants collected from the area of the former Turda County is exemplified in Table 1.

Artemisia campestris L., commonly known as field wormwood, belongs to the Asteraceae family and they are perennial herbs largely spread in the northern hemisphere with wide distribution in Europe, Asia and the arid regions of North Africa (Dib et al., 2016). Pharmacological studies reveal all ethnomedicinal uses of this herb, including anticancer, antifungal and antimicrobial as well as many other applications. Studies and research concerning the chemical composition of the different parts of Artemisia campestris are based on the raw extracts or essential oils (Dib et al., 2016).

The Centaurea genus (Asteraceae) is represented by more than 500 species, mostly located in the Mediterranean region and Western Asia. In recent years, a growing interest has developed in the field of biological activity of plant metabolites. Research in this area considering antimicrobial, antioxidand, cytotoxic, anti-inflammatory and other properties, is currently expanding, reporting various species to possess such biological effects. Among them, the Centaurea species are well known to be used in ethnomedicine (Sokovic et al., 2017). The species of Centaurea found
The plants harvested from the Turda area, which belong to the 'Alexandru Beldie' herbarium, 'Marin Drăcea' National Institute for Research and Development in Forestry-extract

**Table 1.** Plants harvested from the Turda area in the collections of the 'Alexandru Beldie' herbarium, 'Marin Drăcea' National Institute for Research and Development in Forestry-extract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drawer no.</th>
<th>Voucher no.</th>
<th>Herbar/Botanical Collection (from Herbar's label)</th>
<th>Name of species</th>
<th>Date of collection</th>
<th>Place of collection</th>
<th>Collected/Determined by</th>
<th>Preservation degree (1-4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Al. Beldie Herbarium București</td>
<td><em>Artemisia campestris</em> L.</td>
<td>1882.09.01</td>
<td>Torda</td>
<td>Wolff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Al. Beldie Herbarium București</td>
<td><em>Artemisia maritima</em> L. ssp. Salina Willd.</td>
<td>1887.09.01</td>
<td>Torda</td>
<td>Wolff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Al. Beldie Herbarium București</td>
<td><em>Bromus sterilis</em> L.</td>
<td>1895.06.01</td>
<td>Torda</td>
<td>Wolff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Museum Botanicum Universitatis Cluj</td>
<td><em>Bromus commutans</em> Schrad.</td>
<td>1939.06.05</td>
<td>distr. Turda, Băilești 351 m</td>
<td>Todor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>Museum Botanicum Universitatis Cluj</td>
<td><em>Galium flavescens</em> Borb.</td>
<td>1933.07.19</td>
<td>distr. Turda, CheiaTurzii 500 m</td>
<td>Nyárády</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Museum Botanicum Universitatis Cluj</td>
<td><em>Galium boreale</em> L.</td>
<td>1923.06.17</td>
<td>distr. Turda, Borzesti</td>
<td>Nyárády</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Al. Beldie Herbarium București</td>
<td><em>Polygonum aviculare</em> L.</td>
<td>1888.07.01</td>
<td>Torda</td>
<td>Wolff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Herbarium of Polytechnic School București</td>
<td><em>Polygonum aviculare</em> L. var. <em>acutifolium</em> Schur</td>
<td>1887.09.01</td>
<td>Torda</td>
<td>Wolff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Museum Botanicum Universitatis Cluj</td>
<td><em>Trifolium alpestre</em> L.</td>
<td>1938.06.18</td>
<td>distr. Turda, Băilești 351 m</td>
<td>Cupcea, Todor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Museum Botanicum Universitatis Cluj</td>
<td><em>Trifolium montanum</em> L.</td>
<td>1938.06.18</td>
<td>distr. Turda, ValeaMorii</td>
<td>Cupcea, Todor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Trifolium* genus is very large and it includes annual and perennial species. Numerous *Trifolium* species have originated in the middle and south of Europe, North Africa and in the area ranging from the Asia Minor to China. *Trifolium* species are found throughout a wide variety of moist habitats (Temineand Necmettin, 2009). In the Turda area, botanists found five species: *Trifolium alpestre* L., *Trifolium campestris* Schreb., *Trifolium montanum* L., *Trifolium ochroleuca* Huds., *Trifolium repens* L. and *Trifolium rubens* L.

Subsequently, most of the plants collected from the Turda area which belong to the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium collections, are in good condition (Figures 2 and 3). Thus, out of the total of 272, most vouchers, 234, are in very good condition, 28 vouchers are in good condition, 7 vouchers are in poor condition and only 2 are in very poor condition. Most vouchers are kept in the original folders.

The systematization of the plants harvested from the area of the former Turda County concerning the harvesting year, within the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium, allowed the observation of the periods in which the harvesting took place and in which this geographical zone represented an important area of origin regarding the grassland development. Thus, the drawings in this area were collected between 1846 and 1950, with most of them, precisely 143, between 1882 and 1898.

Most of the approximately 180 plants from the area, which are found in the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium, were harvested by the botanist G. Wolff, who seems to have been very attached to this region. Nevertheless, in the herbarium we can also find vouchers with plants picked by other botanists such as Al. Borza, whose name is present on 23 vouchers, and E.G. Nyárády with a number of 15 vouchers. There are also other botanists who contributed with plants to the herbarium of the institute, though not to the extent mentioned above, namely: Gh. Bujorean, Tr. Săvulescu, E. Ghisa, E. Pop, P. Cretzoiu, St. Purcelean, I. Todor, M. Peterfi, St. Purcelean, V. Leandru, G.P. Grintescu.
Figure 2. Plates with plants from the Turda area, located in the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium: (a) _Astragalus exscapus_; (b) _Aster linosyris [lingulatus]_

Figure 3. Plates with plants from the Turda area, extracted from the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium: (a) _Potentilla supina_; (b) _Campanula kladniana [kirikkoleensis]_

CONCLUSIONS

The area of Turda, as well as its surroundings which reached county or county level between 1876 and 1950, is a territory with a rich biodiversity. Consequently, it represents an important source which contributed to the development and enrichment of the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium of the ‘Marin Drăcea’ NIRDF. The plants collected in this region come from over 100 different genera of plants, most of them belonging to the _Polygonum, Bromus, Galium_ and _Trifolium_ genus, as the plants were collected between 1846 and 1950.

Numerous specimens of plants from Turda area can be found in the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium. Out of a total of 272 plants, the majority (143) were collected during 1882-1898. Even though more than 180 plates were assembled by the botanist G. Wolff, approximately 13 specialists collected plants from the forests, pastures and meadows of the former Turda County which expanded the collections of the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium. Information regarding these vouchers can be found at ‘Marin Drăcea’ NIRDF where this valuable collection is kept and it can be also accessed. To conclude, the ‘Alexandru Beldie’ herbarium is a valuable source of information which can be accessed by worldwide researchers and scientists in the process of scientific research, with a view to formulating and publishing academic papers.
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Conflicts of Interest
The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest

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