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***Seligeria acutifolia* (Seligeriaceae) new to Sicily**

Abstract

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Seligeria acutifolia has been found for the first time in Sicily. The new locality is the third in Italy.

Introduction

The bryophyte *Seligeria acutifolia* Lindb. was collected during a joint bryological excursion on Sicily, Italy in May 2005. This is the first record of this species from Sicily. The locality is situated close to Bosco della Ficuzza (South of Palermo) at Rocca Busambra Mt (37° 50' N; 13° 25' E) at an elevation of c. 1,100 metres.

The genus *Seligeria* Bruch & al. was previously only represented in Sicily by recently recorded specimens of *Seligeria pusilla* (Hedw.) Bruch & al. (Lo Giudice & al. 2005). The two species are similar in habit. *Seligeria acutifolia* mainly differs in that the apices of the upper leaves are typically acute, that the differentiated perichaetial leaves usually reach the capsules and that the seta is shorter with shorter surface cells (Fig. 1).

The Sicilian specimens are deposited in the herbaria of Stockholm (S) and Palermo (PAL).

Distribution

Seligeria acutifolia is mainly a sub-mediterranean and montane taxon (Düll 1985). It is widely scattered throughout Europe. Besides on Sicily it has also been found on the Italian mainland, in Belgium, [former] Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain and Greece, on Ireland, in Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden and former Yugoslavia (Düll 1985). Records from Spain have been reported by Ros & al. (1989) and Cano & al. (1996). The occurrence in the Czech Republic has recently been confirmed by Kucera & Vána (2003) as well as the records from France (Mahevas 2000), Poland (Ochyra & Gos 1994) and Norway (Frisvoll & Blom 1997). It was recently reported new to Africa (Morocco) by Jimenez & al. (2002). Outside Europe and Africa it has been recorded from Turkey (Kürschner & Erdag 2005), North America (Vitt 1976), Kyrgystan and Turkmenistan (Gos

& Ochyra 1994) and Japan (Hill & al. 1992).

In Italy it was recorded for the first time in Tuscany from Monterivecchi above Masse near Florence (Levier 1905). Due to the lack of modern records it was for a long time considered extinct by Cortini Pedrotti & Aleffi (1992), but somewhat later Gos & Ochyra (1994) reported it again from Fonte Romano near Campo di Giove in Abruzzo in central Italy. The Sicilian record is thus the first find in southern Italy (Fig. 2).

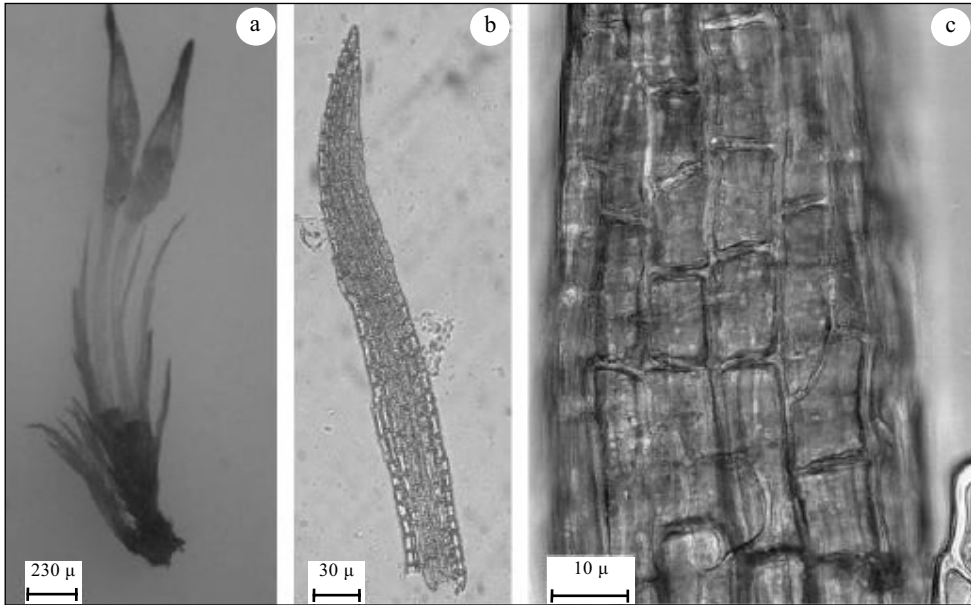


Fig. 1. *Seligeria acutifolia* Lindb. **a**: shoots with sporophytes; **b**: upper leaf of sterile shoot; **c**: surface cells of seta (from Sicilian specimen).

Habitat and Ecology

In Sicily *Seligeria acutifolia* was found on a moist, north-facing, half-shaded, perpendicular rock wall. The bedrock consisted of soft calcareous sandstone. It occurred together with other mosses like *Encalypta vulgaris* Hedw., *Pterogonium gracile* (Hedw.) Sm. and *Tortella tortuosa* (Hedw.) Limpr. Outside Sicily the species has been found in various habitats, including caves, half-shaded rock walls and soft calcareous bedrock. In Great Britain it grows on moist, shaded limestone rocks, where it occurs in crevices and under cliff overhangs (Hill & al. 1992; Smith, 2004).

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Fig. 2. Distribution of *Seligeria acutifolia* Lindb. in Italy.

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