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A survey of the genus *Festuca* L. (*Poaceae*) in Italy. VI. *F. violacea* Gaudin subsp. *italica*, a new subspecies from the central and southern Apennines

Abstract

Foggi, B., Rossi, G., Signorini, M. A.: A survey of the genus *Festuca* L. (*Poaceae*) in Italy. VI. *F. violacea* subsp. *italica*, a new subspecies from the central and southern Apennines. — Fl. Medit. 8: 31-36. 1998. — ISSN 1120-4052.

The lectotype of *Festuca violacea* Gaudin var. *macrathera* Hack. is designated. The plants from the central and southern Apennines, identified in the past as *F. violacea* var. *macrathera*, are ascribed to a new subspecies, *F. violacea* subsp. *italica*, described here for the first time.

A fescue growing on the summit pastures of the central and southern Apennines was identified by Markgraf-Dannenberg (1980) as *F. violacea* Gaudin subsp. *macrathera* (Hack.) Markgr.-Dann. Under this name, or under the name *F. macrathera* (Hack.) Markgr.-Dann. (Pignatti & Markgraf-Dannenberg 1982), it has been reported subsequently in several other floristic studies (e.g. Anzalone 1984, Tammaro 1986, Veri 1988, Santangelo & al. 1994, Conti 1995, Lucchese 1995, Tondi & Plini 1995, Caputo & al. 1997) and works on vegetation (Biondi & al. 1992, Petriccione & Persia 1995).

After personal investigations in W and Z, we finally succeeded in finding the type material of *F. violacea* var. *macrathera* Hack. in Markgraf-Dannenberg's personal herbarium, among the specimens she obtained on loan from W.

Festuca violacea Gaudin var. *macrathera* Hack. in Beck, Ann. Naturhist. Mus. Wien 2: 45 (1887).

Lectotypus here designated: "Dr. G. Beck: Plantae Bosniae et Hercegovinae/ exsiccatae Nr./ *Festuca violacea* Schl./ v. *macrathera* Hack./ Herceg. Auf der Tisovica alpe in der Prenj/ Plan. c. 1600 m/ VII [manu Beck?]/ 1885 leg. Dr. G. Beck// *F. rubra* subsp. *violacea*/ var. *macrathera* [manu Hackel]// [two more labels with handwritten annotations by Markgraf-Dannenberg]" W, Herb. Hackel, 5220 (Fig. 1).

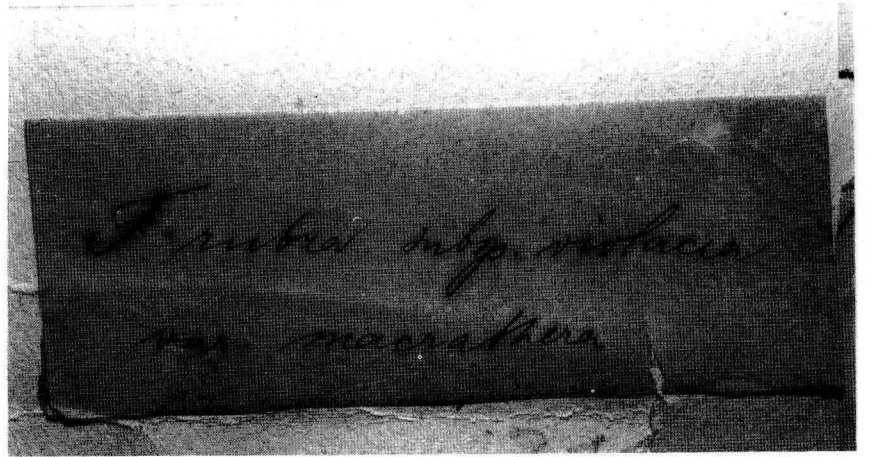
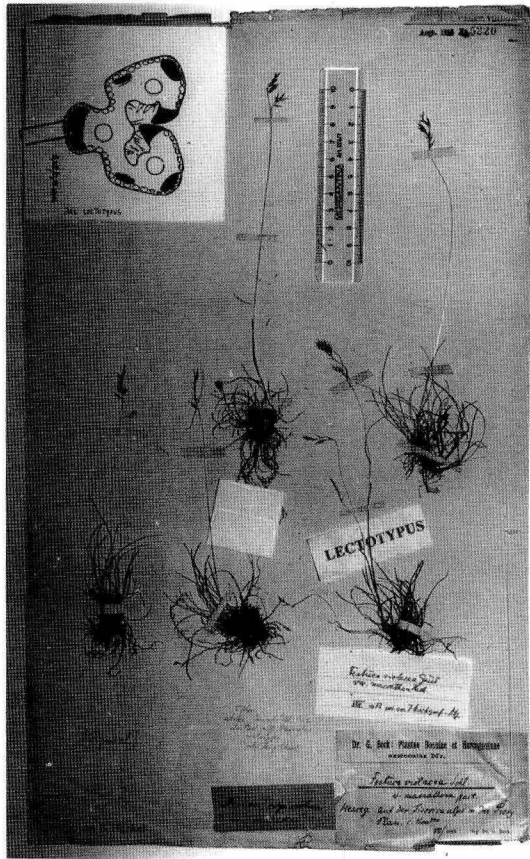


Fig. 1. Lectotype of *Festuca violacea* Gaudin var. *macrathera* Hackel (W); **a**, whole sheet; **b**, label handwritten by E. Hackel.

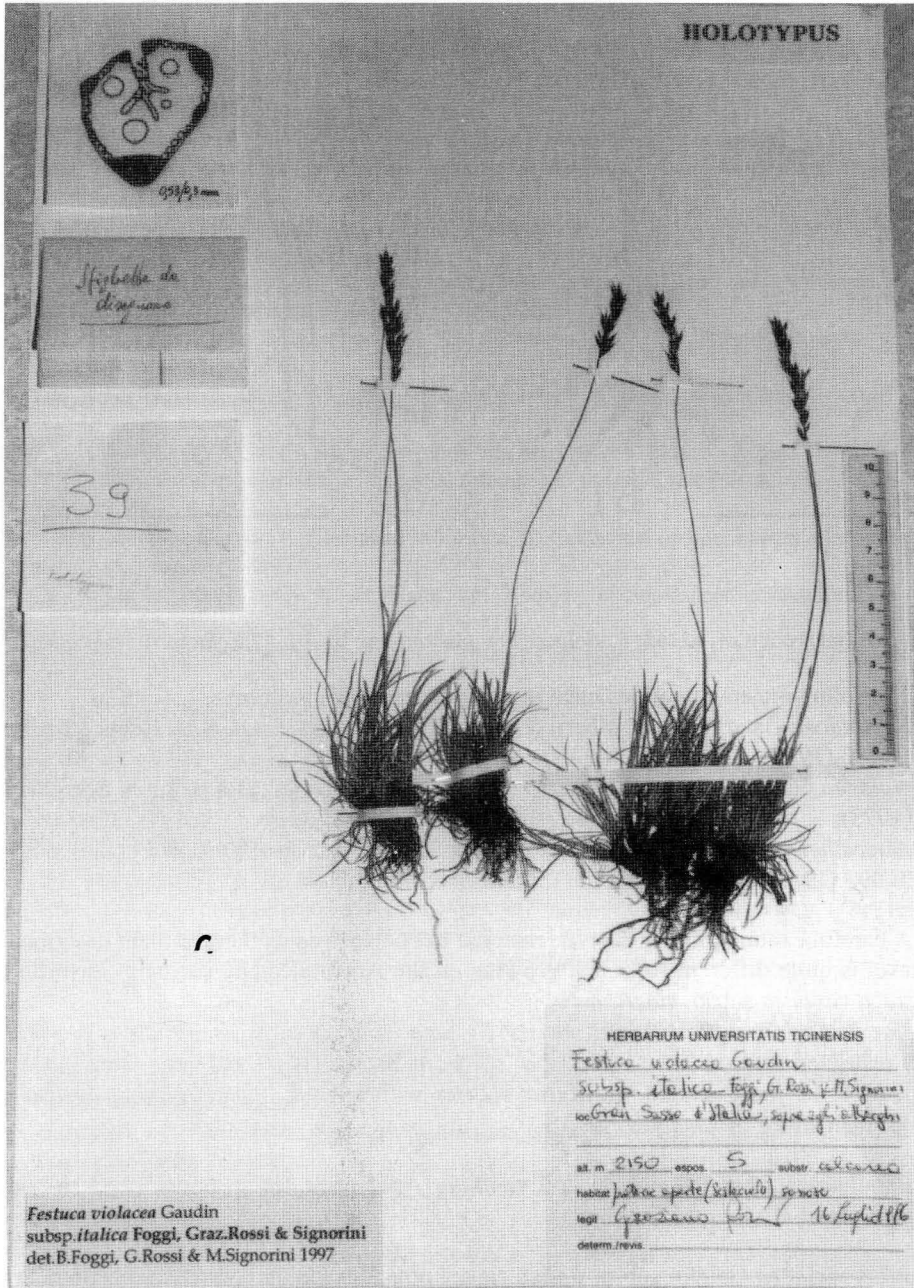


Fig. 2. Holotype of *Festuca violacea* Gaudin subsp. *italica* subsp. nova (FI).

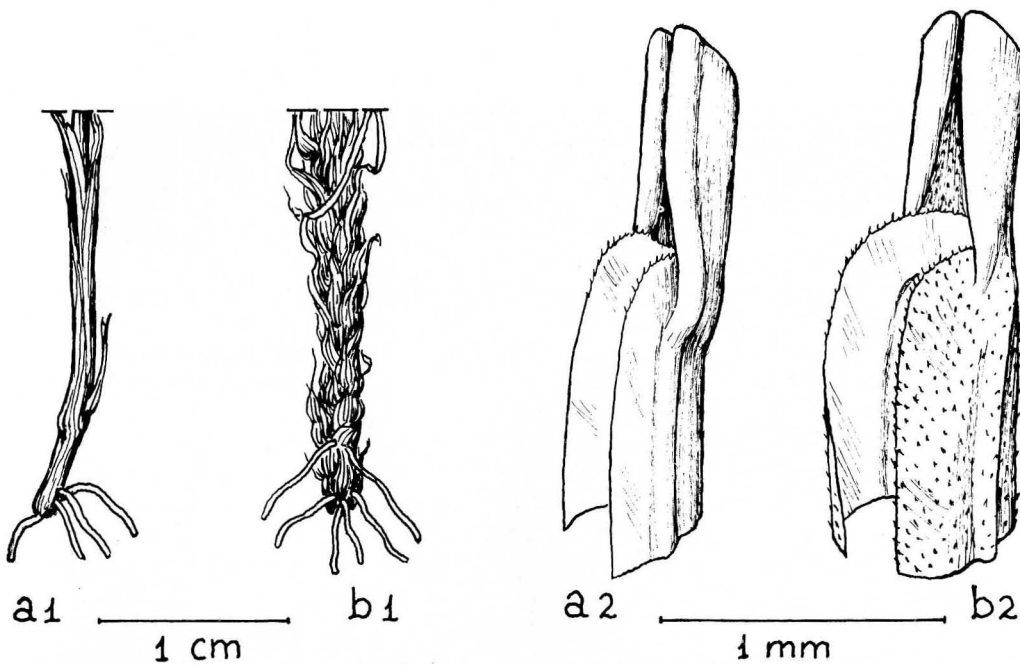


Fig. 3. Basal sheaths of: **a1, a2**, *F. violacea* var. *macrathera*; **b1, b2**, *F. violacea* subsp. *italica*.

The following combinations have been based upon this basionym:

F. violacea Gaudin f. *macrathera* (Hack.) Hayek, Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg. Beih. 30/3: 283 (1932);

F. violacea Gaudin subsp. *macrathera* (Hack.) Markgr.-Dann., Bot. J. Linn. Soc. 76: 326 (1978);

F. macrathera (Hack.) Markgr.-Dann. ex Pignatti & Markgr.-Dann. in Pignatti, Fl. Ital. 3: 493 (1982), *nomen invalidum* (Signorini & Foggi 1997).

A careful examination of the type material has convinced us that the plant described by Hackel is quite different from that growing on the Apennines and currently identified as *Festuca violacea* subsp. *macrathera*.

The data so far available indicate that *Festuca violacea* subsp. *macrathera* is confined to a restricted area on the mountains of southern Bosnia (BIH) and Crna Gora (YU) and appears to be more related with other species within the *F. violacea* group (*sensu* Pils 1980) than with *F. violacea* s. str.

Populations from the central and southern Apennines are to be ascribed to a new subspecies of *F. violacea* Gaudin.

Festuca violacea Gaudin subsp. *italica* subsp. nova. — Holotypus: “Gran Sasso d’Italia. Sopra agli alberghi. Praterie aperte sassose (Seslerieto)”. 2150 m, Vesp. S, substrato calcarei, 16 Jul 1996, G. Rossi (FI). Isotypes in G, PAV, W (Fig. 2).

A *Festuca violacea* subsp. *violacea* et subsp. *macrathera* differt longitudine majore spicularum (mm 6.5-8), glumae inferioris (mm 3-4.5) superiorisque (mm 3.5-5.5). A *F. violacea* subsp. *violacea* etiam arista longiore (mm 2-3); a *F. violacea* subsp. *macrathera* vaginis transverse valde rugosis et minute puberulis.

— *Festuca violacea* Gaudin subsp. *macrathera* (Hack.) Markgr.-Dann. p. p., quoad plant. ital., excl. typ.

Trivial name: *festuca italica*.

Chromosome number: $2n = 14$ (Mount Viglio, Simbruini group; Campo Imperatore, Gran Sasso d'Italia; Mount Pollino).

Distribution and ecology: *F. violacea* subsp. *italica* is distributed on the summit areas of the central and southern Apennines, from Mount Catria (Marche) to Mount Pollino (Calabria).

It grows preferably on limestone, generally above the timberline.

As we observed at Monti Simbruini (Latium-Abruzzo), Gran Sasso d'Italia and on Monte Pollino, it occurs mainly in xero-cryophytic grasslands, with abundant fine debris on the soil surface.

It grows in association with *Carex kitaibeliana* and/or *Sesleria apennina* as dominant species.

The systematic relationships of *F. violacea* subsp. *italica* with other taxa of the *Festuca violacea* group (*sensu* Pils 1980) growing on the Alps and the Apennines are currently under investigation by the authors of this paper.

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