

## *CARTHAMUS CAERULEUS* L. (CARDUEAE, ASTERACEAE), A NEW RECORD FOR RODOS ISLAND, GREECE

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Published online: January 30, 2018

### Abstract

*Carthamus caeruleus* is here reported as a new record for the flora of Rodos Island, Greece, based on observations in the field and photographs taken in 2015. The species grows near a dirt road margin close to the Apolakkia dam and its population consists of c. 30 mature plants. This population appears local; further research in the surroundings did not reveal any additional plants.

### Introduction

The flora of Rodos Island (also written as Rhodos and Rhodes) in the South Aegean region (Greece) has been quite well known following the floristic publications by Carlström (1987), Strid (2016) and Kleinstauber et al. (2016). Still, some new floristic discoveries are possible since the island is large (approximately 1,400 km<sup>2</sup>), with a mountain top reaching over 1,000 m (Attaviros, 1,215 m), a variety of rock types that constitute the island's geological substrate and a diverse landscape. During field work by the author in May 2015 a nice blue thistle was discovered in the central part of the island and photographed. It is reported below as a new floristic record for Rodos.

### Results and discussion

#### Asteraceae

#### *Carthamus caeruleus* L.

E Aegean: Nomos Dodekanisou: Rodos (Rhodos) Island: Dam of Apolakkia, 2 km NE of Apolakkia village (36° 04'57.72" N, 27°48'03.91" E), road edge / field margin, with *Daucus carota*, *Amni majus*, *Dittrichia* sp., *Cynara cardunculus* etc., c. 80 m, 3 May 2015, Pastrikos obs. (photo).

New for Rodos. During regular fieldwork carried out on the island, a small population of *Carthamus caeruleus* was observed (Fig. 1). The plants, c. 30 in total and divided into two groups, were found at a field margin, on the edge of a rural dirt road (Fig. 2). Further searching in the vicinity the same day was unsuccessful in spotting more plants. However, fieldwork in suitable habitats around Apolakkia will most probably reveal additional plants.

## *Carthamus caeruleus* new for Rodos Island



**Fig.1.** A flowering head of *Carthamus caeruleus*, close to Apolakkia, Rodos, 3 V 2015

While *Carthamus caeruleus* is known to occur in several phytogeographical regions of Greece (Dimopoulos et al., 2013), it is mainly a west Mediterranean plant. On the islands of E. Aegean it is recorded so far only from Kos (Strid, 2016). It has recently been reported from N. and W. Anatolia (Turkey, see Güner & al., 2000, as *Carduncellus caeruleus* (L.) C. Presl), while in Cyprus it has been recorded only twice: a very old collection near Keryneia dates back to 1880 while a more recent one was made E of Pitargou by Papachristophorou (Hand, 2006).

The species' habitat consists of road edges and field margins next to a dam, where it is accompanied by other rather typical ruderal species. The fact that the plants from Cyprus were recorded also 'at field margins and roadside' (Hand, 2006), may indicate a recent anthropogenic introduction of *Carthamus caeruleus* at man-made environments of the E. Mediterranean area.

Seven more species of the same genus have been recorded from the island of Rodos, e.g. *Carthamus boissieri* Halácsy, *C. dentatus* (Forssk.) Vahl, *C. glaucus* M. Bieb., *C. lanatus* L., *C. leucocaulos* Sm., *C. tenuis* (Boiss. & Blanche) Bornm. and *C. tinctorius* L. (Kleinsteuber et al., 2016).



**Fig.2.** The habitat of *Carthamus caeruleus*, c. 2 km NE of Apolakkia: road edges / field margins with low vegetation, Rodos, 3 V 2015

### Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the three anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions.

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