

# The roses of Amorgos (Kiklades, Greece): garden escapes

Jerzy Zieliński<sup>1</sup>, Burkhard Biel<sup>2</sup> & Kit Tan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Dendrology, Polish Academy of Sciences, ul. Parkowa 5, 62-035 Kórnik, Poland

<sup>2</sup> Am Judengarten 3, D-97204 Höchberg, Germany

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Biology, University of Copenhagen, Øster Farimagsgade 2D, DK-1353 Copenhagen K, Denmark, e-mail: kitt@bio.ku.dk (corresponding author)

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**Abstract.** Five different roses are reported from the island of Amorgos in the South Aegean, Greece. Four of them are of hybrid origin. They are not native taxa but represent remnants of former cultivation or are garden escapes and thus treated as ‘casuals’ in the Greek flora.

**Key words:** casual element, Greek flora, *Rosa*, *Rosaceae*, South Aegean

## Introduction

All European wild roses are more or less mesophilous and so their occurrence in regions with a typically Mediterranean climate is restricted mainly to higher elevations. They are absent or rare in the lowlands, especially on the smaller islands. Within the Kiklades in the South Aegean area, only *Rosa canina* L. has been recorded from the island of Naxos (nomos Kikladon, eparchia Naxou; Boratyński & al. 1992: 211), *R. sempervirens* L. from Tinos (eparchia Tinou) and Andros (eparchia Androu), and *R. agrestis* Savi from Andros. No wild native roses are known from the island of Amorgos (eparchia Thiras).

## Material and methods

During field studies in the autumn of 2015 and summer of 2016, over a dozen specimens representing various garden escapes were collected by the second author (B.B.). They have been noted in narrow gorges, abandoned olive terraces and gardens, occasionally in ruderal places not far from villages. All plants ap-

peared to be double-flowered garden roses. Five taxa have been recognized, four of them of hybrid origin. Such roses rarely bear fruit so one can assume that most of the plants observed on Amorgos are probably remnants of former cultivation or discarded garden ornamentals. However, they generally have low chances of long-term survival in the wild and when exposed to the unfavourable local climate. They suffer from heat and water-shortage in summer and rarely attain their best condition. For this reason all the roses described in the following text should be treated as a “casual” element of the flora.

Cited vouchers are provisionally kept in the private herbarium of B. Biel at Höchberg (herb. Biel).

## Results and discussion

*Rosa ×borboniana* N.H.F. Desp. (*R. chinensis* Jacq. × *damascena* Mill.) (Fig. 1)

S-SW of Tholaria, in a narrow gorge with semi-abandoned olive terraces on both sides of a dried-out stream, below well near Lefkes, 90 m, 36°54'47"N, 25°58'48"E, 10.03.2016, Biel 16.004; SE of Aghia



Fig. 1. *Rosa ×borboniana* (photo B. Biel).

Thekla, on abandoned terraces above the stream gorge of Varma, 260 m, 36°48'17"N, 25°51'24"E, 21.03.2016, *Biel* 16.064; in ruderal places and abandoned garden on the outskirts of Lagadha, 230 m, 36°54'22"N, 25°59'55"E, 31.05.2016, *Biel* 16.116d; NW of Arkesini, in abandoned but previously well-tended garden in the area of Kato Kambos, 20 m, 36°48'08"N, 25°46'46"E, 07.06.2016, *Biel* 16.156.



An old hybrid rose with numerous cultivars, often difficult to distinguish from the parent species, particularly from *R. chinensis*, but they do have a broader orifice, more densely hairy styles and often lobed sepals.

#### *Rosa chinensis* Jacq.

S-SW of Tholaria, in a narrow gorge with semi-abandoned olive terraces on both sides of a dried-out stream, below well near Lefkes, 90 m, 36°54'47"N, 25°58'48"E, 15.11.2015, *Biel* 15.121a & 15.121b.

A species popular in cultivation, very variable, represented by numerous cultivars, recognized by its uniform prickles, usually large, simple, acute-serrate and lustrous leaflets, narrow stipules, narrow orifice and exerted styles. It was observed in fruiting state, climbing on the branches of a 3 m tall tree of *Pistacia atlantica*, the latter reported in the Kiklades, only from Amorgos.

#### *Rosa chinensis* Jacq. × *R. multiflora* Thunb.

SE of Aghia Thekla, on abandoned terraces above the stream gorge of Varma, 260 m, 36°48'17"N, 25°51'24"E, 21.03.2016, *Biel* 16.065; *loc. ibid.*, 06.06.2016, *Biel* 16.152.

All plants have distinctly incised stipules as in *R. multiflora*, but *Biel* 16.152 is more similar to *R. chinensis*.

#### *Rosa damascena* Mill. (Fig. 2)

S-SW of Tholaria, in a narrow gorge with semi-abandoned olive terraces on both sides of a dried-out stream, below well near Lefkes, 90 m, 36°54'47"N, 25°58'48"E, 15.11.2015, *Biel* 15.121c; *loc. ibid.*, 28.05.2016, *Biel* 16.085; in ruderal places and abandoned garden on the outskirts of Lagadha, 230 m, 36°54'22"N, 25°59'55"E, 31.05.2016, *Biel* 16.116a & 16.116b.

An old rose, probably of hybrid origin, often cultivated as an ornamental shrub or for the perfume trade, recognized by stems covered with uneven prickles, usually intermixed with acicles, by its simple-serrate leaflets, long, densely stipitate-glandular pedicels and hypanthia, broad orifice and densely hairy styles forming a large head.

Fig. 2. *Rosa damascena* (photo B. Biel).



Fig. 3. *Rosa ×francofurtana* (photo B. Biel).

*Rosa ×francofurtana* Münchh. (*R. gallica* L. × *R. majalis* Herrm.) (Fig. 3)

In ruderal places and abandoned garden on the outskirts of Lagadha, 230 m, 36°54'22" N, 25°59'55" E, 31.05.2016, *Biel* 16.116c.

An old, rarely cultivated hybrid rose recognized by its smooth stems, simple-serrate leaflets, broad stipules and broad cup-shaped hypanthia with broad orifice and densely hairy styles forming a large head.

*Rosa multiflora* Thunb.

In a now abandoned, but previously well-tended garden S of Katapola-Rachidi, 10 m, 36°49'37"N, 25°52'02"E, 04.06.2016, *Biel* 16.135.

It is easily distinguished by its climbing stems, fringed stipules, small leaflets and paniculate inflorescences. With its pink double flowers, it is probably the cultivar 'Carnea' but it is not so easy to determine whether it is a hybrid or not.

## Reference

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