**Acis orientalis: a new name for Leucojum ionicum (Amaryllidaceae)**

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**Abstract.** Acis ionica Bareka, Kamari & Phitos (2006) is a heterotypic synonym of Leucojum ionicum Kit Tan, Mullaj, Sfikas & Strid (2004). When the latter is transferred to the genus Acis, consequently the name ionicum becomes unavailable. The species is renamed Acis orientalis Strid, nomen novum.

**Key words:** Albanian flora, Greek flora, Ionian Islands, new name, nomenclature

_Leucojum autumnale_ L. is a species of small, autumn-flowering bulbous plants subsequently subdivided into _L. autumnale_ s.str. in Portugal, Spain and Italy, and some other species elsewhere in the Mediterranean area. One of the latter is _L. valentinum_ Pau, recorded from E Spain. Webb (1980: 77) reported _L. valentinum_ from an area N of Valencia and from the Ionian Islands, Greece – a very unusual disjunction.

_Leucojum valentinum_ from locus classicus, as well as plants from the Ionian island of Kefallinia identified as _L. valentinum_, were cultivated in the Göteborg Botanical Garden. A closer comparison led to the conclusion that the latter were quite different, which called for their description as a separate species, _L. ionicum_ (Kit Tan, Mullaj, Sfikas & Strid, 2004).

Two years later, Bareka, Kamari & Phitos (2006) described some very similar plants as _Acis ionica_. The authors wrote: “Remarkably, Tan & al. (2004) have recently described a new taxon from the Ionian area, _Leucojum ionicum_, which superficially looks similar and has a very similar distribution, but differs very significantly by the presence of hollow (‘fistulose’) scapes, which exclude the species from the genus _Acis_”.

Characters for _Leucojum ionicum_ and _Acis ionicum_, as given in the original publications, are summarized in Table 1. There are only two differences:

1. The scape is said to be fistulose in _Leucojum ionicum_ and solid in _Acis ionicum_. The description of _Leucojum ionicum_ was based on living material. In cross sections of fresh scapes, it is evident that there is a narrow but distinct central cavity. This is less obvious in the herbarium material.

2. The length of the style was given as c. 9 mm in _Leucojum ionicum_ and 5.5–8 mm in _Acis ionicum_. However, the style lengthens in the course of anthesis, and therefore, the measures are approximate. Even if true, the difference would hardly be sufficient to separate species or genera.

It is obvious (and must have been obvious also to Bareka, Kamari & Phitos) that _Leucojum ionicum_ and _Acis ionicum_ are conspecific. Historically, _Acis_ has been regarded as a subgenus/section of _Leucojum_, or as a separate genus. A phylogenetic analysis by Lledó & al. (2004) supports the latter option.

Since _Acis ionicum_ Bareka, Kamari & Phitos (2006) is a heterotypic synonym of _Leucojum ionicum_ Kit Tan, Mullaj, Sfikas & Strid (2004), the name ionicum becomes unavailable when the latter is transferred to the genus _Acis_ (Article 53.1 in the International Code for Botanical Nomenclature). Therefore, it is renamed _Acis orientalis_ Strid, nomen novum (type, description, etc., see Kit Tan & al. 2004).
Table 1. Characters of *Leucojum ionicum* and *Acis ionica* (as given in the original descriptions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th><em>Leucojum ionicum</em></th>
<th><em>Acis ionica</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulb</td>
<td>Ovoid, 2.5-3 × 1.5-2.5 cm</td>
<td>Ovoid, 15-25 mm in diam.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulb tunics</td>
<td>The outer blackish-brown, the inner pale brown</td>
<td>Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scape</td>
<td>10-30(-40) cm, slender, erect, fistulous, slightly sulcate</td>
<td>8-20(-25) cm, slender, erect, solid, slightly sulcate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>2-3, developing after anthesis, (5-)10-20(-24) cm × 1.25(-3) mm, flat or slightly canaliculate</td>
<td>2-3(-5), appearing after anthesis, 12-22 cm × 2-3 mm, narrowly linear to filiform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spathes</td>
<td>2, subequal to unequal, 17-25 × c. 2 mm, scarious or slightly green on keel</td>
<td>2, unequal, 17-28(-32) × 1-1.5 mm, membranous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>(1-)3-5(-7), pendent, in a terminal, more or less unilateral umbel</td>
<td>(1-)2-4(-6), pendent, in a terminal, unilateral umbel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perianth</td>
<td>Flared-campanulate</td>
<td>Conically campanulate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perianth segments</td>
<td>In 2 subequal whorls, 12-15 × 5-8 mm, white, the outer apiculate</td>
<td>In 2 subequal whorls, (8-)9-13(-15) mm, white, the outer mucronate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filaments</td>
<td>Filiform, 1.5-2 mm, white</td>
<td>Filiform, 1.5-3 mm, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthers</td>
<td>Linear-oblong, 4.5 × c. 0.8 mm, obtuse, bright yellow</td>
<td>Oblong, 4.5-5 mm, bright yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capsule</td>
<td>Ovoid-globose, 8-10 mm in diam., subfleshy</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeds</td>
<td>Ovoid, 2.5-3 mm, black, with strophiole</td>
<td>2.5-3 mm, black, with strophiole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromosome number</td>
<td>2n=16</td>
<td>2n=16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowering time</td>
<td>September-November</td>
<td>September-October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat</td>
<td>Open ledges and rock crevices near the coast, limestone</td>
<td>Open, calcareous, rocky places, often facing the sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altitude</td>
<td>0-330 m</td>
<td>3-350(-450) m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Ionian Islands from Zakynthos to Lefkas, locally in W Sterea Ellas (Etolias-Akarnanias), SW Albania near Vlore</td>
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References


