



Nomenclatural corrections in vascular plants, 1. Valid publication of *Allium savranicum* “Besser”

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This paper opens a series of short notes dealing with critical cases in nomenclature of vascular plants. References to the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi and plants* (abbreviated as ICN) are provided according to its Melbourne edition (McNeill *et al.* 2012).

The psammophilous species *Allium savranicum* “Besser” is confined to sandy steppes and pine forests on riverine sands in the steppe and forest-steppe zones of the Ukraine and southwestern Russia (Omelchuk-Myakushko 1979). It was distinguished from the Crimean endemic *A. marschallianum* Vvedensky (1935: 184) in the length of pedicels, the colour of tepals and anthers (Omelchuk-Myakushko 1979, Seregin 2012). This species is accepted in a number of recent standard works (Omelchuk-Myakushko 1979, Czerepanov 1995, Mosyakin & Fedoronchuk 1999, Sagalaev 2006) but its name is deemed to be not validly published by Besser (Gregory *et al.* 1998).

Most of the authors who treated *A. savranicum* stated that this name was published by Wilibald Swibert von Besser (1784–1842) in a supplement to the Catalogue of plants cultivated in the botanical garden in Krzemieniec, due in 1818, although nobody has seen the original publication yet (Vvedensky 1935, Omelchuk-Myakushko 1979). While in Krzemieniec in the Polish part of the Russian Empire (now Kremenets, Ukraine), Austrian-born Besser was the teacher of zoology and botany and the director of the botanical garden at the Krzemieniec Lyceum (Polovtsov 1900). Eleven printed catalogues from the garden were distributed until the Lyceum was shut down by the Russian authorities in 1831, supplemented by four instalments containing descriptions of new species established by Besser, which were published in 1810–1830 but none in 1818 (Lipschitz 1947).

The name *A. savranicum* first appeared in print in the synonymy of *A. caucasicum* Marschall von Bieberstein (1819: 258) in Besser (1822: 55). In the latter work Besser stated that this species, no longer recognized by him, was included in the aforementioned supplement dated 1818 but remained in the manuscript. Evidently this mention was the very source of further references to the ghost publication of 1818. Possibly aware that the Catalogue of 1818 did not see print, Gregory *et al.* (1998) credited the valid publication of *A. savranicum* to Oxner (1935: 301) who was the first to resurrect the species after the unpublished intention of its original author. This authorship appeared already in the Index to volume 5 of *Flora Europaea*, although the species name was omitted in the taxonomic treatment of *Allium* (Stearn 1980).

When accepting *A. savranicum*, Oxner (1935) believed that it has already been validly published by Besser. For this reason he provided the species description only in the Ukrainian language that was the language of the whole book. This book, the text of which was completed already in 1927, was delayed in print, finally appearing in the very year when the Latin language became mandatory for descriptions of new taxa in extant vascular plants. In the absence of validating description or diagnosis in Oxner (1935), for Art. 38.1(a) of ICN to apply, a reference to a previously published descriptive matter in Latin should be provided by Oxner as validating author. In 1935, such a reference may have been indirect (Art. 38.13). Oxner’s ascription of the species name to Besser could be qualified as an indirect reference to the description of *A. savranicum*, if Besser ever published any. But has he really done that?

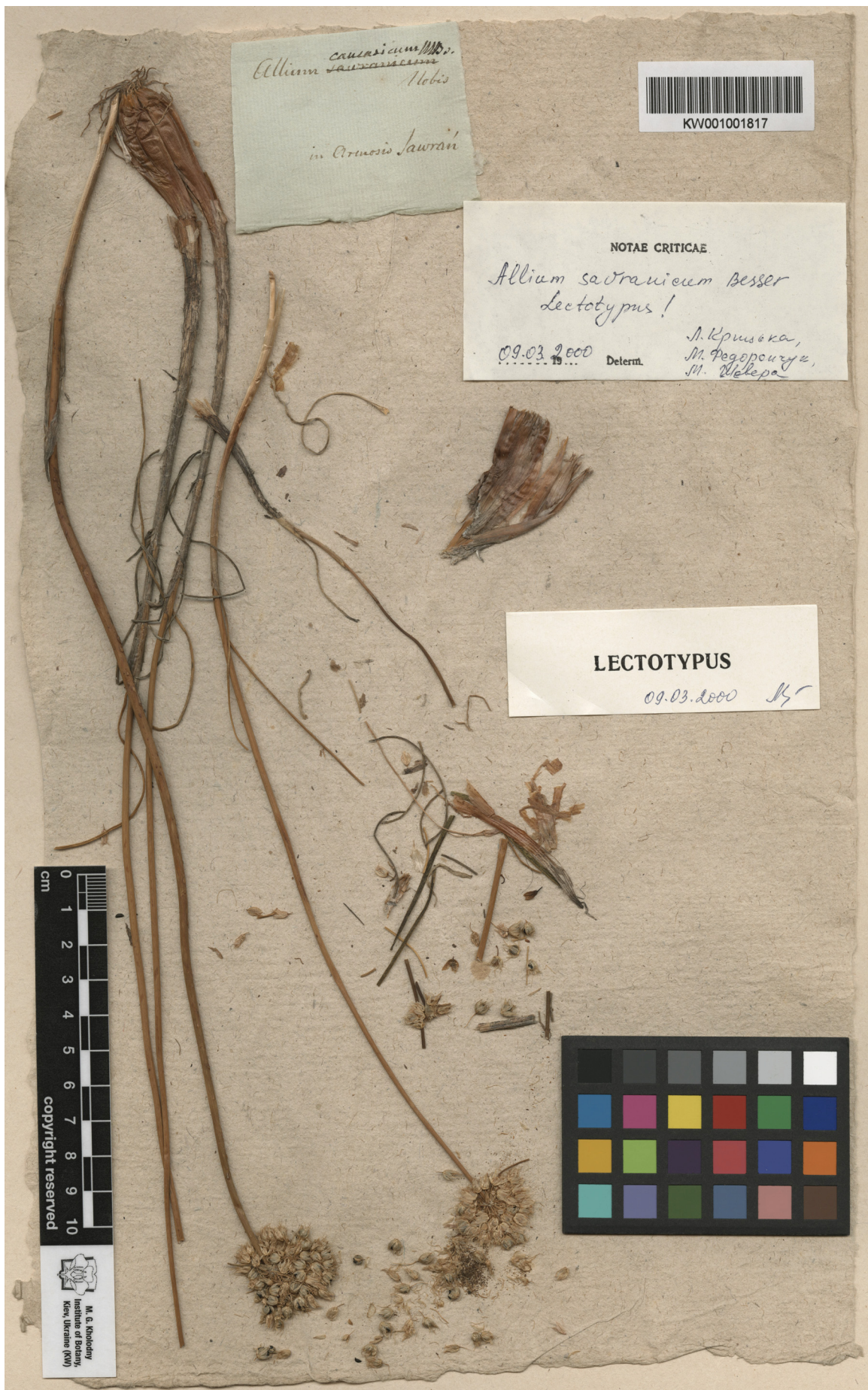


FIGURE 1. Lectotype specimen of *Allium savranicum*.

Indeed, in Schultes & Schultes (1830) we find a reference to “*A. savranicum* Besser Cat. H. Crem. Suppl. 1818” placed in the synonymy of *A. caucasicum* (= *A. saxatile* Marschall von Bieberstein 1798: 114), the very formula that has been regularly copied from Besser (1822) also by later authors. Josef Schultes (1773–1831) was the mentor of Besser, under whose supervision Besser obtained his doctoral degree from the University of Krakow in the last day of 1807 (Lipschitz 1947). Schultes was obliged with the occurrence of the otherwise Caucasian species *A. caucasicum* in “Podolia” (western Ukraine) to Besser, who continued keeping close connections with Schultes and communicated a detailed description of the Ukrainian plant to his senior colleague. Schultes had not accepted Besser’s species but quoted its Latin description from Besser’s letter in annotations to the account of *A. caucasicum*; this description was explicitly ascribed to Besser and effectively published.

In effect of Art. 38.13, with Besser’s description published in Schultes & Schultes (1830), any author who accepted the species or infraspecific name of *Allium* with the final epithet “*savranicum*” and provided a reference to “Besser”, would have sufficiently fulfilled conditions for valid publication of a new name. The first author to do so was not Oxner but Nyman (1882: 741) who subordinated “*A. savranicum* Bess.” as a variety to *A. globosum* Marschall von Bieberstein (1808: 262). In spite of the use of a binary designation instead of an infraspecific epithet, Nyman validly published the varietal name under Art. 21.4, referring to the taxon description indirectly via the name of *A. savranicum* and Besser’s authorship. Since the rank of the original, unpublished Besser’s name was different from the one accepted by Nyman, the authorship of the new name belongs to Nyman (Art. 46.3). Consequently, Oxner’s use of *A. savranicum* at the rank of species qualifies for publishing a new combination based on Nyman’s name, indirectly referred to by the mention of “Bess.” at the species epithet (Art. 41.3).

Similarly to the statement in Besser (1822), the locality associated with the original description of *A. savranicum* was “in sabulosis circa Sawran Podoliae” (currently the town of Savran, Odessa Region, the Ukraine). Besser described the species on the basis of live plants cultivated in the botanical garden under his supervision, of which he preserved a specimen that is still kept at the Herbarium (KW) of the Kholodny Institute of Botany in Kiev as part of the vast Besser’s private herbarium. This herbarium was purchased by the University of Kiev after Besser’s death (Lipschitz 1947) and transferred in 1931 to the newly established Institute of Botany (Shiyan 2011). Even though the validating description of the name had not been located by that time, this specimen was correctly designated as the lectotype of *A. savranicum* by Krytzka *et al.* (2000).

Allium savranicum (Nyman) Oxner (1935: 301) ≡ *Allium globosum* var. *savranicum* Nyman (1882: 741).

Type:—UKRAINE. Odessa Region, Savran Town. “*Allium savranicum* Nobis. In arenosis Sawrań”, s.d., [Besser] s.n. (lectotype KW-Bess 001001817!, designated by Krytzka *et al.* 2000: 695) (Fig. 1).

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