

Press release – 09/02/2021



***Androsace albimontana*, species of the year of the Swiss Systematics Society**

This year, the Alps have once again proven to be a source of undiscovered biodiversity. After many seasons of field work and research in herbaria, a new plant species of the primulaceae family (Primulaceae) has been described: *Androsace albimontana*. This new species was chosen this year as an emblem by the Swiss Systematics Society (SSS). This pretty rock jasmine is characterised by its pale pink flowers, its hairiness and its preferred habitat. In contrast to the downy rock jasmine, with which it has so far been confused, the new species grows in scree slopes and moraines of siliceous rock from 1800 m to over 3000 m above sea level. In the Mont-Blanc Massif, it has been found on both sides of the Franco-Swiss border and, like the other species of the genus *Androsace*, it should join the list of protected species in both countries. In Switzerland, it is found in the canton of Vaud, on non-calcareous rocks and schists in the Morcles massif and in the Valais, in the Mont-Blanc massif and in the western Pennine Alps. This discovery adds a new species to the already rich flora of the Alps, whose ecosystems are unfortunately often threatened by human activities. For the record, the famous naturalist Horace Bénédict de Saussure noted the pink flowers of certain rock jasmynes during his travels in the Mont-Blanc massif in 1788, without suspecting they would be officially described as a new species 233 years later!

Publication of reference : JACQUEMOUD, F. & D. JORDAN (2020). *Androsace albimontana* (Primulaceae): une nouvelle espèce des Alpes (France, Suisse, Italie) à distinguer de *A. pubescens*. *Candollea* 75: 149 – 155. En français, résumés anglais et français. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15553/c2020v751a14>

For more information on *Androsace albimontana*:

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Androsace albigmontana, moraines d'Armançette, 2200m, Massif du Mont-Blanc, Haute-Savoie. Phot. Denis Jordan, ©CJBG, publ. autoris.

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About the SSS:

Since 2005 the Swiss Systematics Society (SSS) brings together researchers who study the diversity of living things, a science called systematics. Its purpose is to make an inventory of all animal and plant species (extant and extinct, including fossil species), to describe them, to give them a name and classify them, and to study their relationships over time (phylogeny) and in space (biogeography). The SSS presents on its web pages the list of species described by researchers working in Swiss institutions since 2015: [New Species Switzerland](#). In 2020, this list includes 196 new species of animals and plants, both current and fossil.

The SSS is a member of the Biology Platform of the Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences.