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## Considerations on endemic species of *Hieracium* in the flora of Romania

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The genus *Hieracium* is represented by 239 species within the Romanian flora, thus holding the first place among all vascular plant genera occurring in this territory.

The Romanian representatives of *Hieracium* are extremely numerous and polymorphic. Due to this, their identification is very difficult. The unusually high number of 61 endemic species of *Hieracium* found in this territory is particularly noteworthy. It has become evident that the most variable of these are the species and hybrids of section *Pseudostenotheca* from the Retezat Mountains, which are considered to be a genuine genetic centre.

Morphological characters serving to delimit endemic species have shown that most of these may have resulted from hybridisation between one or more parents.

Ecological analyses of endemic species found in Romania revealed that almost all are to be encountered in mountainous regions of the Carpathians at altitudes between 1000-1200 m.

A special status is held by the Retezat Mountains, from where 32 of the endemic species have been described, representing 52.4% of the endemic *Hieracium* species in Romania, followed by the Apuseni Mountains with 10 species (16.4%), the Godeanu Mountains with 9 species (14.8%), and the Bucegi Mountains with 7 species (11.5%).

We consider that the delimitation of endemic species based on morphological characters plays an important role, however, at the present stage of research this is not enough and must be enhanced by cytogenetic and molecular genetic research, which can confirm the taxonomic position and the origin of *Hieracium* species, especially that of the endemic and hybrid species.

Finally, we present a taxon close to *Hieracium*, *Andryala levitomentosa* (NYÁR.) P.D.SELL (syn.: *Pietrosia levitomentosa* NYÁR., *Hieracium levitomentosum* (NYÁR.) SOÓ), an endemic species from the Eastern Carpathians, which was identified in a very small area of the Bistriței Mountains, in Petrosul 'Bogolin'.