The creation of a checklist of cultivated Forget-me-not to track down *Myosotis dissitiflora* Baker (Boraginaceae)
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Myosotis dissitiflora Baker

- Collected by J. Atkins in 1852 or 1853 on the Splügenpass, Switzerland (Atkins, 1868)
- Cultivated as *M. montana* Hort. before to be described as *M. dissitiflora* by Baker in 1868
- Ornamental plants sold from the 1870’s in Europe and USA
- 9 cultivars:
  - ‘Blue Perfection’, ‘Splendens’ or ‘Anne-Marie Fischer’
*M. dissitiflora*, just a variety of *M. sylvatica*?

- Annual plant
- Flowers 14 mm large, distant on the cyme
- Pedicels up to 10 mm long
- Hairs on the leaf surface eglandular
- Nutlets with an appendix

Seeds illustrations from Bojnanský & Fargašová 2007
M. dissitiflora: Native of Switzerland?

- Unknown from the Swiss flora
  - No references in any Flora and never recorded
  - Recent research on the fields on the Splügenpass
  - No evidences from herbarium

- Related to
  - M. sparsiflora (East Europe-Russia)
  - M. amoena (Caucasus)
  - M. propinqua (Caucasus)
    - Subgenus Strophiostoma (Turcz.) M. Pop.

- Collected somewhere else by Atkins? Mixed in cultivation? From hybrid origins?
Is *Myosotis dissitiflora* still in cultivation?

The jungle of the *Myosotis* cultivars:

- *Myosotis dissitiflora* ‘Blue Bird’
- *Myosotis oblongata* ‘Blue Bird’
- *Myosotis sylvatica* ‘Blue Bird’
- *Myosotis dissitiflora* var. *oblongata* ‘Blue Bird’
- *Myosotis dissitiflora oblongata*
- *M. sylvatica* var. *dissitiflora*
Methods

• Researches in nursery catalogs:
  – Wageningen Library and its special collection of nursery and seeds catalogs
  – Digitalised catalogs available on-line as Bücherei des Deutschen Gartenbaues e.V., Biodiversity Heritage Library, etc.

• Contacts with breeders or seeds producers

• Cultivation from available cultivars
Cultivars listed

- Myosotis welwitschii: 354
- Myosotis azorica: 170
- Myosotis dissitiflora: 5
- Myosotis latifolia: 1
- Myosotis hybrida: 32
- Myosotis scorpioides: 13
- Myosotis sylvatica: 9
- Synonyms: 9
- Invalid names: 4
M. alpestris Hort.

- Synonym of M. sylvatica still largely found in catalogs
- Origin of the missnaming? Dating back to the introduction of M. sylvatica as ornamental in the 1840’s
- Over 170 cultivars
  - ‘Victoria’,
  - ‘Stricta’
  - ‘Elegantissima’
- Confusion with M. alpestris F.W. Schmidt?
- M. alpestris has appeared in cultivation, as M. alpestris ‘Rupicola’ or as the wild type

Myosotis sylvatica ‘Victoria’ (Haage, 1892)
Myosotis scorpioides L.

- Syn. *M. palustris* (L.) Hill
- Perennial plant
- From damp places around Europe
- Already cultivated in 1800’s along *M. arvensis*
- *M. scorpioides* ‘Azurea Major’: 1860 (Thorburn & Co., 1860)
- *M. scorpioides* ‘Goeppingeri’: 1862 (Haage & Schmidt, 1862)
- Other cultivars as
  - ‘Semperflorens’
  - ‘Tom Thumb’
  - ‘Semperflorens Tom Thumb’
**Myosotis latifolia** Poir

- Syn. *M. oblongata* Link
- Introduce in cultivation in 1870 by Haage & Schmidt as: *M. oblongata* (*M. latifolia*)
- Listed as a synonym of *M. sylvatica*
- Endemic species from the Canary Islands
- Never clearly sold as *M. latifolia*
  - But indications that it cannot be cultivated below 0°C
- *M. ‘Blaue Grasmücke’* or *M. ‘Blue Bird’* are cultivars still found in cultivation
- Perennial plants with woody based
- Present as neophyt in California (Joyal, 1989)
- Hybrids with *M. sylvatica*?
Other cultivated species

- New Zealand species as *M. capitata* or *M. pulvinaris*
- *M. welwitschii*: (syn. *M. cintra*) introduced in 1890 and appears in cultivation until 1948
- *M. azorica*: Extinct in cultivation but still present as a neophyte in Argentina. Threatened in the Azores
- *M. rehsteineri*: endemic to Constance Lake (CH/D). Populations from Geneva Lake have been introduced in cultivation but are both now extinct.
Myosotis hybrida Hort.

Firstly described for *M. azorica* x *M. sylvatica* (‘Impératice Elisabeth’)

But given as well for the following hybrids:

- *M. scorpioides* x *M. sylvatica* (‘Ruth Fischer’)
- *M. dissitiflora* x *M. latifolia* (‘Elfriede’)

The hybrid origin is not always clearly stated.

These cultivars are now extinct in cultivation

(Illustration Horticole, 1868)
Myosotis hybrida Hort.

- Breed in 1999 by Markl Heinz and introduced by Innovaplant Gmbh (patent US PP18310 P2)
- Hybrid between *M. scorpioides* x *M. sylvatica*

Conclusions

- *Myosotis dissitiflora* is extinct in cultivation
  - But some indications that the species occurs as a neophyt in the UK (Sell & Murell, 2009)
- Misnaming is important at the specific level. What about the cultivars?
- How important is the hybridisation?
  - Not clear study and poorly understood within the genus
=> But it shows the utility for building checklists for lesser known taxa
Next steps

- Searching for *M. dissitiflora* in herbariums and check the relationships with other members of the subgenus *Strophiostoma*

- Experiment the hybridisation of *Myosotis*

• And if by any chance, you have any indications about *M. dissitiflora* in cultivation or as a neophyte, please let me know.

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