ON THE PRESENCE OF CEPHALANTHERA CAUCASICA (ORCHIDACEAE) IN RUSSIA: REDISCOVERY OF A THREATENED ORCHID IN THE REPUBLIC OF DAGESTAN

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Introduction
The orchid family (Orchidaceae) is one of the most threatened groups of vascular plants (Fay, 2018; Khapugin, 2020; Wraith et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2021). Approximately 28,000 species of orchids are known and it is the largest plant family in the world (Christenhusz & Byng, 2016). At least 135 orchid species were reported from Russia (Efimov, 2020). This is not particularly rich but the importance of their protection cannot be neglected. Russia is the largest country in the world and some generally threatened species of orchids (e.g. Cypripedium calceolus L.) may be numerous within its territory (Jakubska-Busse et al., 2021).

The genus Cephalanthera Rich. (Orchidaceae: Epidendroideae: Neottieae) is distributed in the Holarctic and the Oriental regions and contains 19 species according to POWO (2022). Among them, Cephalanthera austinae (A. Gray) A. Heller is known from North America, while all the other species inhabit the Old World. Seven species were listed for the Russian flora (Efimov, 2020). Cephalanthera damasonium (Mill.) Druce, C. longifolia (L.) R.M. Fritsch, and C. rubra (L.) Rich. are distributed there in the European part, including the Crimea and the North Caucasus. Two other species are known from the Far East, namely Cephalanthera erecta (Thunb.) Blume and C. longibracteata Blume. The sixth species, Cephalanthera epipactoides Fisch. & C.A. Mey., is restricted in its distribution to the Black Sea coastal area of the Krasnodar Krai in the North Caucasus (Fateryga et al., 2020). All these species are included in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation (2008).

The seventh species is Cephalanthera caucasica Kraenzl. It was reported from the River Samur delta in the Republic of Dagestan, North Caucasus (Grossheim, 1940; Averyanov, 2006; Murtazaliyev, 2009; Ivanov, 2019), but was included neither to the national Red Data Book nor the Red Data Book of the Republic of Dagestan (2020). Due to the absence of recent records of this species from the Republic of Dagestan, Efimov (2020) considered C. caucasica doubtfully present in Russia. He speculated that the reports of this species could be based on misidentifications of a possible hybrid between C. damasonium and C. longifolia, while the range of the true C. caucasica was outside of Russia. It is also noteworthy mentioning...
that C. caucasica has recently been synonymised with C. kotschyana Renz & Taubenheim (POWO, 2022). The latter species was reported from Turkey and Azerbaijan (Delforge, 2016), while C. cauca-
sica was known from Georgia, Armenia, Azerbai-
jan (type locality in Talysh), and Iran (Renz, 1978; Akhalkatsi et al., 2003; Averyanov, 2006; Vakhr-
meeva et al., 2008; Delforge, 2016).

The purpose of the present study is to ascer-
tain, whether C. caucasica is present in Russia or not, to clarify its taxonomic status and diagnostic
characters, as well as to report preliminary data on
its distribution and conservation status.

Material and Methods

Field observations have been carried out in
the Republic of Dagestan in 2022. Representa-
tives of the genus Cephalanthera (excluding C. rubra)
were studied there mainly in two localities, namely
the vicinity of the village Tatil, Tabasaranskiy dis-
trict (42.000278° N, 48.004722° E) on 04.05.2022,
08.05.2022, and 23.05.2022, and the Samur For-
est in the vicinity of Khtun-Kazmalyar, Magara-
mkent district (41.815556° N, 48.528611° E) on
07.05.2022. The first locality was a Fagus orient-
talis Lipsky (hereinafter – beech) forest, while the
second one was a deciduous forest with the pre-
domination of hornbeam (Carpinus betulus L.)
and participation of oak (Quercus robur L.), ash
(Fraxinus sp.), maple (Acer sp.), and other trees,
and numerous creepers (e.g. Smilax excelsa L.,
Hedera pastuchovii Woronow, Vitis vinifera L.).
Photographs of the studied plants were made with
a Canon EOS RP digital camera and a Sigma AF
105 mm f/2.8 macro lens with a Yongnuo YN-
14EX macro flash and uploaded to the Plantarium
website (Plantarium, 2022).

Twenty three plants were measured in the field
with a metal tape measure. The measured param-
eters were the shoot and the inflorescence lengths
as well as the length and the width of the longest
leaf. The number of leaves and flowers was also
counted. After that, the lowest flower of the plant
was cut and its straightened parts were placed be-
tween a paper and a piece of a transparent adhe-
sive tape. These flowers were then measured in the
laboratory with a vernier calliper. The measured
parameters were the length of the ovary, the length
and the width of sepals and petals, the length of
the lip, the width of the epichile, and the length of
the column. Then, minimum, maximum, and mean
values were calculated for each parameter. Confi-
dence intervals of the mean values were calculated
for 95% confidence level (p = 0.05). A morpholog-
dical description was made according to the origi-
nal data. Statistical significance of the differences
between the mean values of various species was
checked with the Student’s t-test (Lakin, 1990). A
PCA analysis was made using Statistica 7 software
(StatSoft Inc., USA).

Literature data, herbarium material, and obser-
vations on iNaturalist website (https://www.
inaturalist.org/) were also studied. The data on
herbarium specimens and their scans were pro-
vided by Petr G. Efimov (V.L. Komarov Botani-
cal Institute RAS, Russia) from his database of
the orchids of Russia (for the complete list of the
studied herbaria, see Efimov, 2020). A distribu-
tion map was generated, using the online tool for
producing publication-quality point maps, Sim-
pleMapppr (Shorthouse, 2010). For specimens,
for which no geographic co-ordinates were pres-
ent on labels, co-ordinates were estimated based
on the approximate centre of the most specific
locality given.

For definition of the IUCN Red List status of
C. caucasica at the national level (Russia), we
used the guidelines for IUCN Red List assessment
(2012a,b, 2022), focusing on the extent of occur-
dence (EOO), the area of occupancy (AOO), and
the number of the known localities. EOO and AOO
were evaluated using GeoCAT, a geospatial con-
servation assessment tool (Bachman et al., 2011).

Results and Discussion

Summary of records

We found 40 flowering specimens of C. cau-
casica and 20 specimens of C. damasonium
in the vicinity of the village Tatil. They were
counted along a 2-km transect (about 10 m wide)
around the locality. There were also several pre-
generative specimens of C. caucasica, but it was
difficult to count all of them along this transect.
Two additional herbarium specimens of C. cau-
casica collected in the Republic of Dagestan
were found in collections of DAG and LENUD,
and one observation was found on the iNatural-
ist website (https://www.inaturalist.org/). We did
not reveal any specimens of this species in the
Samur Forest, from where it had been reported in
the literature (Grossheim, 1940; Ivanov, 2019).
At this locality, the genus Cephalanthera
were represented by one C. damasonium and
more than 200 C. longifolia plants (counted along
a 2-km transect, like in the vicinity of the village
Tatil). Detailed information on C. caucasica is
presented below, including its taxonomy, morphology, distribution, and conservation status.

**Taxonomy**


Kränzlin (1931) cited the gathering №2740 by R.F. Hohenacker in the protologue but did not indicate the number of specimens or herbarium sheets seen by him. Averyanov (1994) reported this gathering as the type of *C. caucasica* indicating that there are holo- and isotype(s) in LE. According to the Art. 9.10 of ICN (Turland et al., 2018), this «holotype» would be corrected to «lectotype»; however, it is not clear, which specimen might be designated by L.V. Averyanov as the lectotype by this way. There are three sheets of *C. caucasica* (original material) in LE with Averyanov’s handwritten labels from 1994. Two of them are with Hohenacker’s №2740: LE01072106 and LE01072108. They are syntypes according to the Art. 9.6 of ICN (Turland et al., 2018). Among them, only the first one is with F. Kränzlin’s handwritten label (Fig. 1). Both sheets were labeled by L.V. Averyanov as isotypes. The third sheet (LE01072107) was labeled by him as «Typus»; this specimen is with the same F. Kränzlin’s handwritten label but without Hohenacker’s №2740 that is not corresponding to the protologue. Therefore, it belongs to the original material according to the Art. 9.4 of ICN (Turland et al., 2018) but not to the syntypes. Thus, since the L.V. Averyanov’s designation is unclear, a further lectotypification is possible according to the Art. 9.17 of ICN (Turland et al., 2018). We hereby designate the specimen LE01072106 as the lectotype because it is with Hohenacker’s №2740, fully corresponding to the protologue, and F. Kränzlin’s handwritten label indicating that he saw this specimen.

*Cephalanthera caucasica* has recently been synonymised with *C. kotschyana* (POWO, 2022). According to POWO (2022), the taxonomic backbone for this solution was the book published by Kühn et al. (2019), where *C. caucasica* was merely listed as one of the synonyms of *C. kotschyana* without any argumentation. We do not follow such a taxonomic treatment of *C. caucasica* for two reasons. First of all, *C. caucasica* was described earlier (Kränzlin, 1931) than *C. kotschyana* (Renz & Taubenheim, 1980). Thus, the name *C. caucasica* published in 1931 has priority over the name *C. kotschyana* published in 1980. Accordingly, if these two taxa are treated as conspecific, the name *C. caucasica* should be accepted while the name *C. kotschyana* should be a synonym. Secondly, we prefer to recognise these taxa as two distinct species until they are thoroughly studied morphologically (and, possibly, genetically, too). There are at least two diagnostic characters declared to distinguish *C. caucasica* from *C. kotschyana* (see below). Thus, a statement of their synonymy without a strong argumentation looks not convincing. Therefore, we consider the genus *Cephalanthera* containing 20 species but not 19 as it was reported by POWO (2022).
Fig. 2. *Cephalanthera caucasica* Kraenzl. from the vicinity of the village Tatil, Republic of Dagestan, Russia. Designations: A – specimen at the beginning of flowering (08.05.2022); B – inflorescence in full flower (23.05.2022) (Author: Alexander V. Fateryga).

**Description**

*Cephalanthera caucasica* is a rhizomatous perennial herb (Fig. 2A). Plants are usually with a single shoot. Stem is erect to slightly inclined, green, glabrous, with spirally arranged leaves. Leaves are green, spreading, significantly exceeding internodes; lower ones are ovate, medium ones are ovate to elliptic, upper ones are lanceolate. Inflorescence is ± compact (Fig. 2B). Bracts are linear, usually not exceeding flowers, diminishing in length higher up. Flowers are sessile, directed ± sidewards. Ovary is whitish, glabrous. Perianth is ± opened, pure white with light pinkish shade on hypochile. Sepals are lanceolate; petals are broadly lanceolate, shorter than sepals. Lip is divided into hypochile and epichile. Hypochile is concave, with two erect, rounded lateral lobes, without spur. Epichile is cordate, with several orange-yellow longitudinal papillate ridges. Measurements are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Morphometric parameters of the studied specimens of *Cephalanthera caucasica* Kraenzl., *C. damasonium* (Mill.) Druce, and *C. longifolia* (L.) R.M. Fritsch from the Republic of Dagestan, Russia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th><em>Cephalanthera caucasica</em>, n = 9</th>
<th><em>Cephalanthera damasonium</em>, n = 5</th>
<th><em>Cephalanthera longifolia</em>, n = 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shoot length (with inflorescence), cm</td>
<td>min–max: 19.0–42.8; m ± M: 29.5 ± 5.1</td>
<td>min–max: 21.3–31.0; m ± M: 26.0 ± 3.3</td>
<td>min–max: 26.5–56.8; m ± M: 38.0 ± 6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflorescence length, cm</td>
<td>3.0–11.0; m ± M: 6.9 ± 1.9</td>
<td>3.3–8.0; m ± M: 4.9 ± 1.7</td>
<td>7.0–22.5; m ± M: 13.7 ± 3.1**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of leaves</td>
<td>6–9; m ± M: 7.6 ± 0.6</td>
<td>3–6; m ± M: 4.4 ± 1.0**</td>
<td>4–9; m ± M: 7.0–1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of flowers</td>
<td>2–25; m ± M: 9.7 ± 4.9</td>
<td>3–6; m ± M: 4.6 ± 1.3</td>
<td>10–34; m ± M: 17.3 ± 4.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longest leaf length, mm</td>
<td>8.2–14.2; m ± M: 11.0 ± 1.1</td>
<td>5.9–6.6; m ± M: 6.2 ± 0.3**</td>
<td>8.0–12.0; m ± M: 9.6 ± 0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longest leaf width, mm</td>
<td>2.6–5.1; m ± M: 3.8 ± 0.6</td>
<td>1.6–6.4; m ± M: 2.9 ± 1.7</td>
<td>2.2–3.9; m ± M: 2.8 ± 0.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovary length, mm</td>
<td>24–41; m ± M: 37.5 ± 3.8</td>
<td>13–34; m ± M: 27.0 ± 7.3</td>
<td>25–36; m ± M: 31.2 ± 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper sepal length, mm</td>
<td>16–27; m ± M: 23.4 ± 2.3</td>
<td>16–21; m ± M: 19.0 ± 1.8*</td>
<td>17–24; m ± M: 20.7 ± 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper sepal width, mm</td>
<td>6–9; m ± M: 7.7 ± 0.7</td>
<td>5–8; m ± M: 6.2 ± 1.0**</td>
<td>3–8; m ± M: 5.7 ± 0.9**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral sepal length, mm</td>
<td>17–27; m ± M: 23.1 ± 2.0</td>
<td>17–21; m ± M: 18.8 ± 1.6**</td>
<td>17–22; m ± M: 20.0 ± 0.9**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral sepal width, mm</td>
<td>6–10; m ± M: 8.0 ± 0.9</td>
<td>6–9; m ± M: 8.0 ± 1.2</td>
<td>5–9; m ± M: 6.9 ± 0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petal length, mm</td>
<td>14–21; m ± M: 17.8 ± 1.3</td>
<td>15–18; m ± M: 16.4 ± 1.3</td>
<td>13–16; m ± M: 14.9 ± 0.6**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petal width, mm</td>
<td>6–9; m ± M: 7.7 ± 0.7</td>
<td>6–9; m ± M: 7.4 ± 1.0</td>
<td>5–7; m ± M: 5.7 ± 0.5**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lip length, mm</td>
<td>11–15; m ± M: 13.1 ± 0.8</td>
<td>10–12; m ± M: 11.0 ± 0.9**</td>
<td>6–10; m ± M: 9.0 ± 0.9**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epichile width, mm</td>
<td>10–14; m ± M: 11.8 ± 0.8</td>
<td>11–14; m ± M: 12.4 ± 1.0</td>
<td>7–12; m ± M: 9.7 ± 1.0**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column length, mm</td>
<td>10–13; m ± M: 11.6 ± 0.7</td>
<td>10–11; m ± M: 10.6 ± 0.5</td>
<td>9–12; m ± M: 10.6 ± 0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n – sample size, min – minimum value, max – maximum value, m – mean value, M – confidence interval (p = 0.05). Values of *C. damasonium* and *C. longifolia* significantly different from those of *C. caucasica* are marked with one (p = 0.05) or two (p = 0.01) asterisks.
**Differences with the related taxa**

Cephalanthera caucasica is sympatric with two relatively similar species, namely C. damasonium and C. longifolia. The characters of these three species are sometimes slightly overlapping (Fig. 3) which can cause misidentifications. The most noteworthy character of C. caucasica is the whitish ovary. It was stable in all plants from the Republic of Dagestan in our study, and this is in consistence with photographs published by Renz (1978) and Delforge (2016) from Iran and Azerbaijan, correspondingly. Only the drawing published by Vakhrameeva et al. (2008) has green ovaries that could be apparently due to its preparation based on a dried plant. Secondly, C. caucasica can be distinguished from C. damasonium by much longer and more numerous leaves and from C. longifolia by much shorter (and not loose but compact) inflorescence and broader leaves. Flowers of C. caucasica are larger than those of both C. damasonium and especially C. longifolia (Table 1). In addition, the flowers of C. damasonium are directed rather upwards than sidewards. Cephalanthera caucasica is different from allopatric C. kotschyana by the whitish ovary and much longer leaves. The latter species has a green ovary and leaves ± equal in length to the internodes, as in C. damasonium, but large flowers directed rather sidewards, as in C. caucasica (Delforge, 2016).

Efimov (2020) supposed that the reports of C. caucasica from the Republic of Dagestan might refer to a hybrid between C. damasonium and C. longifolia. We cannot exclude the presence of such a hybrid in the Republic of Dagestan, but the plants identified as C. caucasica in the present study are not hybrids. First of all, both C. damasonium and C. longifolia have a green ovary, while C. caucasica has a whitish ovary. Secondly, the flowers of C. caucasica are not intermediate in size between two other species but are larger than those of both C. damasonium and C. longifolia. Thirdly, C. damasonium is an autogamous species (Claessens & Kleynen, 2011) and any hybrids with it should be extremely rare, while we observed 40 flowering specimens of C. caucasica within one locality. Fourthly, C. longifolia was not present in the locality with C. caucasica in our study. Therefore, we can state that C. caucasica is indeed present in Russia. Moreover, it is not visually different from plants of this species occurring in Iran (Renz, 1978) and Azerbaijan (Delforge, 2016).

**Key to the species of the genus Cephalanthera from the North Caucasus**

1. Flowers are purple; rachis of inflorescence and ovary are largely pubescent .................................................. C. rubra
2. Hypochile is with spur; leaves are ± equal in length to internodes or shorter ......................................................... C. epipactoides
3. Leaves are ± equal in length to internodes or slightly longer; flowers are self-pollinating, directed ± upwards; ovary is always green ...................................................................................................................... C. damasonium
4. Middle leaves are ovate to elliptic; inflorescence is short and compact; ovary is whitish ........................................... C. caucasica
5. Middle leaves are lanceolate; inflorescence is long and loose; ovary is green ................................................................................ C. longifolia

**Specimens examined**

Russia: Republic of Dagestan. Kaytagskiy District: (without given locality), 20.07.1971, Nasrulaeva (LENUD). Tabasaranisky District: vicinity of Gurkhun, northern slope, 15.05.2014, Mallaliev (DAG); (without given locality, 42.011165° N, 47.989351° E), 08.05.2018, Teymurov (Teymurov, 2020); vicinity of the village Tatil, beech forest (42.000278° N, 48.004722° E), 08.05.2022, Fateryga, Svirin (PHEO); vicinity of the village Tatil, beech forest (42.000278° N, 48.004722° E), 23.05.2022, Fateryga (PHEO).

Efimov (2020) also reported that he observed a specimen of C. caucasica from the Republic of Dagestan in LE. It was apparently LE01038159 collected in the vicinity of Makhachkala in 1956 and identified as C. caucasica. In our opinion, this specimen belongs not to C. caucasica but to C. longifolia due to much smaller flowers.

**Distribution**

Russia (Republic of Dagestan), Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran (Renz, 1978; Akhalkatsi et al., 2003; Averyanov, 2006; Vakhrameeva et al., 2008; Delforge, 2016). The records from Georgia and Armenia are based on literature data (e.g. Vakhrameeva et al., 2008) and require further verification (especially for Armenia). In the Republic of Dagestan, C. caucasica is distributed locally. There are four known localities in Kaytagskiy district and Tabasaranisky district (Fig. 4), or even three, since the records made by A.A. Teymurov and by us were made nearly at the same place.
The presence of *C. caucasica* in the Samur Forest, from where it was reported in the literature (Grossheim, 1940; Ivanov, 2019), is also doubtful and requires confirmation. We observed there numerous plants of *C. longifolia*, and some of them had unusually broad leaves (Fig. 5). Such plants could be misidentified as *C. caucasica*. However, we failed to find the voucher material used by Grossheim (1940) who was apparently the first person reported *C. caucasica* from the Samur Forest. Due to the absence of any specimen-based records we did not include this locality to the distribution map (Fig. 4).

### Habitat, phenology, and pollination

We observed *C. caucasica* in a beech forest only. The flowering period of this species is May. It starts to flower at the same time as *C. longifolia* (evidences from herbarium gathering of both species from the vicinity of the village of Gurkhun) but much earlier than *C. damasonium*. Apparently, there are no published data on pollinators of *C. caucasica*. We can suppose that the pollinators are solitary bees, and the pollination strategy is a food-deceptive mechanism, which is known in *C. longifolia* (Dafni & Ivri, 1981; Claessens & Kleynen, 2011).

### Conservation status

We consider *C. caucasica* a highly threatened species. It occurs in Russia at a few localities within a small area of Kaytagskiy district and Tabasaranskiy district of the Republic of Dagestan. These localities are remnants of beech forests between settlements, orchards, and meadows used for haymaking. The forest remnants themselves can be used as a pasture for cows, since we observed such a case in the vicinity of the village of Tatil. The population number of *C. caucasica* is evidently very low in
Russia. *Cephalanthera caucasica* is one of the two rarest species of the genus in Russia (the second one is *C. erecta*), and at the same time it is the only species of *Cephalanthera* which is not included in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation (2008).

In Russia, the estimated IUCN Red List category for *C. caucasica* is EN B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii). Its EOO is evaluated to be 32.5 km², which is less than 5000 km², and the number of the known localities is no more than five (actually no more than four), that fits to the criterion B1a of the EN category. At the same time, threats have been identified that indicate a continuing decline in habitat quality (due to its use as a pasture), that fits to the criterion B1b(iii). The AOO is evaluated to be 16.0 km², that is less than 500 km², so that both criteria B2a and B2b(iii) are also met.

**Conclusions**

*Cephalanthera caucasica* is present in Kaytagskiy district and Tabasaranskiy district of the Republic of Dagestan (Russia) without any doubts, although in a few localities and by a low number of individuals. The presence of this species in the Samur Forest, reported earlier in the literature (Grossheim, 1940; Ivanov, 2019), could not be confirmed. *Cephalanthera caucasica* is a distinct species, but not a synonym of *C. kotschyana* and not a hybrid between *C. damasonium* and *C. longifolia* either. This species should be included in the next editions of both national and regional Red Data Books.

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Irina Sokolova and Petr Efimov (both – V.L. Komarov Botanical Institute RAS, Russia) helped us in clarifying some taxonomic uncertainties. Petr Efimov provided information from his database of the orchids of Russia, as well as some herbarium scans. Scans of the type specimens of *C. caucasica* were obtained from the Virtual Herbarium LE (http://herbariumle.ru).

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О ПРОИЗРАСТАНИИ CEPHALANTHERA CAUCASICA (ORCHIDACEAE) 
В РОССИИ: НОВАЯ НАХОДКА ОРХИДЕЙ, НАХОДЯЩЕЙСЯ ПОД УГРОЗОЙ ИСЧЕЗНОВЕНИЯ, В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ ДАГЕСТАН

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Cephalanthera caucasica ранее указывали для Самурского леса в Республике Дагестан (Россия). Однако позже эти указания были подвергнуты сомнению – предполагалось, что они могли быть основаны на неверном определении возможных гибридов между C. damasonium и C. longifolia. Кроме того, согласно базе данных Plants of the World Online, этот вид недавно свели в синонимы к C. kotschyanii. В настоящее исследование мы не подтвердили произрастание C. caucasica в Самурском лесу, однако он был обнаружен в нескольких локалитетах, представляющих собой остаточные фрагменты буковых (Fagus orientalis) лесов в пределах Кайтагского и Табасаранского районов Республики Дагестан. Живые рас- тения изучили в окрестностях с. Татиль, где было обнаружено 40 цветущих особей. Исследование их морфологии показало, что они относятся к типичному C. caucasica, а не какому-либо гибриду. Синонимия этого вида с C. kotschyanii также отклонена нами на основании того, что она противоречила Меж- дународному кодексу номенклатуры водорослей, грибов и растений и, кроме того, не была должным образом обоснована. В данной работе обозначен лектотип C. caucasica. Приведено описание вида с промерами основных морфологических параметров. Обсуждаются отличия C. caucasica от близких видов. Приводится ключ для определения видов рода Cephalanthera на Северном Кавказе. Cephalanthera caucasica является в России крайне угрожаемым видом, будучи оцененным со статусом Endangered (EN B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii)), согласно категориям и критериям МСОП. Вид следует включить в следующие издания региональной и федеральной Красных книг.

Ключевые слова: Кавказ, лектотип, охраняемый статус, распространение, таксономия