

BRASSICACEAE

23. MORICANDIA

DC., Syst. Nat. 2:626. 1821.

Undershrubs or herbs, usually robust, glabrous, erect, branched. Leaves fleshy or subfleshy, sessile, glabrous usually glaucous; lower obovate, upper ovate, cordate. Flowers large, white, pink or violet, ebracteate; pedicels short, somewhat thickened in fruit. Sepals erect, inner saccate at the base. Petals twice as long as the sepals, obovate, long-clawed, truncate at the apex. Stamens 6; filaments linear; anthers broadly linear, acute. Lateral nectar glands semilunar; middle glands absent. Siliquae linear, compressed, with subangular valves due to prominent midrib, bilocular, dehiscent, glabrous; stigma 2-lobed, conical with decurrent lobes on a short style; septum membranous, not veined; seeds many, 1-2 seriate, small, ellipsoid, brown, not margined; cotyledons conduplicate.

About 6 species, chiefly of the Mediterranean region; only 2 species are reported from Libya.

BRASSICACEAE

- + Seeds \pm 2-seriate. Plants perennial, sometimes slightly woody below. Leaves mostly broad; upper \pm cordate, amplexicaul. 1. *M. arvensis*
- Seeds \pm 1-seriate. Plants usually shrubby, at least below. Leaves mostly narrow, oblong-obovate, upper ones \pm cuneate below. 2. *M. nitens*

1. ***Moricandia arvensis*** (L.) DC., Syst. Nat. 2:626. 1821; Durand & Barratte, l.c. 14; Keith, l.c. 672. (Fig. 28, A-E).

Brassica arvensis L., Mant. 1:95. 1767; *B. suffruticosa* Desf., Fl. Atl. 2:94. 1798; *M. longirostris* Pomel, Nouv. Mat. 367. 1875; *M. spinosa* Pomel, Nouv. Mat. 365. 1875; *M. divaricata* Coss., Illustr. 35, tab. 25. 1882; *M. arvensis* ssp. *spinosa* (Pomel) Batt. in B. & T. Fl. Alg. 65. 1888; *M. suffruticosa* (Desf.) Coss. et Dur. in Ann. Sc. Nat. Bot. Ser. 44: 282. 1855; *M. arvensis* var. *suffruticosa* (Desf.) DC., Syst. 2:627. 1821; *M. arvensis* ssp. *suffruticosa* (Desf.) Maire, l.c. 40.

Strong and short lived perennial herb, slightly woody at the base, 30-65 cm tall, branched, glabrous, glaucous at least the stems; stems \pm whitish. Leaves \pm fleshy, lower obovate, entire to broadly or slightly crenate \pm narrowed at the base; upper leaves ovate to oblong-elliptic \pm cordate, entire, usually amplexicaul or semi-amplexicaul at the base and acute. Flowers large showy, c. 1.5 cm across, pink or violet on lax racemes. Sepals c. 1 cm long. Petals c. 2 cm long, long clawed. Stamens 8-10: 10-14 mm; anthers linear, (2-) 3-4 mm long. Siliquae 30-100 x (1.5-) 2-3 mm, linear, glabrous, compressed, subtetragonal; septum hyaline, not veined; beak 3-9 mm long; seeds (1-) 2-seriate, many small, less than a mm long, brown. n=14.

Type: Habitat in Europae australis arvis bumentibus.

A-2 El Kaliba, 30 km fro Gharian, rocky soil, violet flowers, 10.4.1974, *M. Godeh* 171; Boghilan, 21.3.1974, *B. Faras* 456; Cabaw, soil sandy, 9.6.1974, *B. Faras* 459; **B-1** Wadi Malah, c. 10 km from Nalut, stony ground, growing in clumps, 50-60 cm tall, flowers light violet, 4.5.1972, *S.I. Ali* 291 & 303; c. 37 km from Kebba, towards Mizda, *S.I. Ali* 1952; Near Wadi Malah, c. 3 km from Nalut, flat limestone rocks, 35-55 cm tall, erect, 18.4.1975, *S.I. Ali* 2862; Nalut, Ejwebia, 8.6.1974, *B. Faras*; 25 km from Nalut Wazen, 7.6.1974, *B. Faras* 587.

BRASSICACEAE

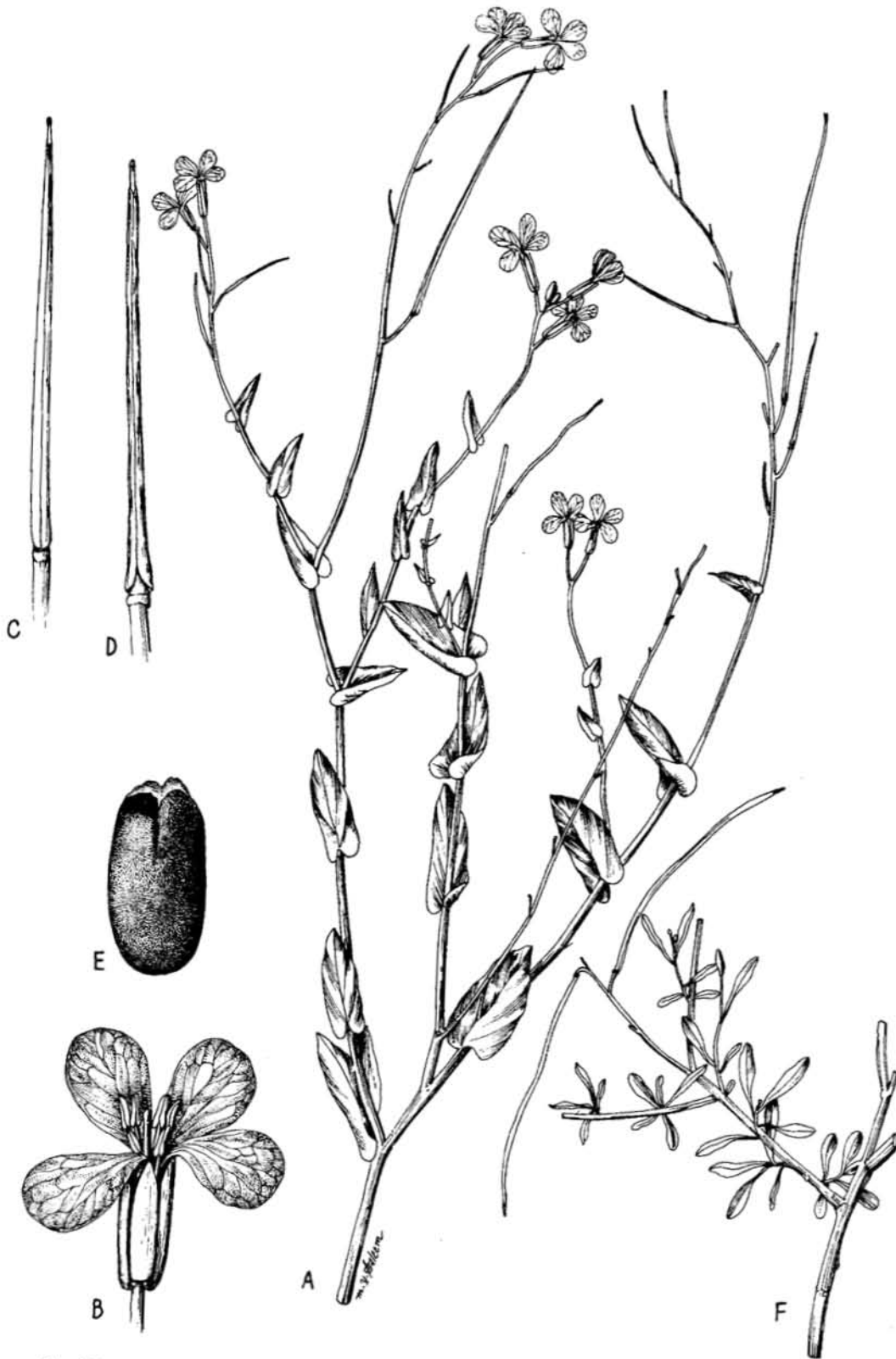


Fig. 28 *Moricandia arvensis*: A, flowering and fruiting branch x 0.5; B, flower x 2; C, silique, dorsal view x 1; D, silique, lateral view x 1; E, seed x 20; *M. nitens*: F, fruiting branch x 0.5.

BRASSICACEAE

Distribution: Mediterranean region (Europe and Morocco to W.Libya).

A short lived perennial, with \pm fleshy leaves, growing in sandy and stony ground or rocks in N.W.Libya, very variable in leaf shape, siliquae size and seriation of seeds. Browsed by livestock.

Flowers: March-June (round the year?).

Vern. Alkiass, Hemim, Afarfar, Sciass.

2. **Moricandia nitens** (Viv.) Durand & Barratte, Fl. Lib. Prod. 15. 1910 (p.p.); Pamp., Fl. Ciren. 233. 1931; Keith, l.c. 673; Tack., St. Fl. Egypt ed. 2:200. 1974. (Fig.28,F).

Hesperis nitens Viv., Fl.Lib. Spec. 38, t. 5, fig. 3. 1824; *M.arvensis* ssp. *nitens* (Viv.) Maire in M.C. 2636. 1939 (p.p.); Fl. Af. Nord. 13: 39. fig. 14. 1967; *M. dumosa* Boiss., Diagn. ser. 1. 8:25. 1849; *M. suffruticosa* var. *nitens* (Viv.) Schweinf. & Aschers., Illust. Fl. Egypt. 41.1887.

Differs from the previous species by its weak habit, whitish stem and deep green leaves, fruits c. 1.5 mm broad, seeds usually 1-seriate, leaves smaller, often aggregated, mostly obovate-oblong, narrowed below.

Type: « H. in rupibus maritimis Pentapoleos, Viv., l.c. tab. 5, fig. 3.

A-8 Between Derna & Tamini, small shrubs on rocks, very common, flowers violet, 24.10.1975, S.M.H.Jafri 6050 (ULT); 60 km before Tobruk, stony mound, common, flowers violet, showy, 24.10.1975, S.M.H.Jafri 6054 (ULT).

Distribution: N.E. Libya, Egypt, Palestine to Arabia Petrea.

A rather weak habit with whitish stems and green leaves and probably flowering period (?) may distinguish this species, which seems to be confined to the rocks east of Al Baida (Derna-Tobruk) in Libya.

Flowers: Sept.-Oct. (round the year?).