

Collecting seeds of *Consolida samia* (July 3, 2023)

Our field mission team, which rediscovered *Consolida samia* after 61 years from its first collection and description as a new species for Science (see the [press release of June 5, 2023](#)), made a second visit 5 weeks later at the locus classicus (in the southwestern slopes of Mt Kerkis, Samos Island) with the aim to collect fruits and seeds of this critically endangered, local endemic therophyte. The team was comprised, as previously, by the biologists Apostolis Kaltsis and Sofoklis Mouratidis and the researcher of the flora of Samos George Fakas; this time the team was also accompanied by an old time friend of our lab, Stelios Marcou, a retired high school biology teacher and Samian naturalist, making a total of mere 5 (including Sven Snogerup, the initial discoverer of the species) who have seen and admired this plant growing in the wild.

The *Consolida samia* population, encountered this time, was even larger than in late May and it seems that the rather cool and rainy weather, which quite unexpectedly prevailed during most of June 2023, had led to a second flowering wave (Fig. 1). Thus, plants were found growing at a wide spectrum of different stages, from full flowering to full fruiting and drying (Fig. 2). It is noteworthy that, similarly to the previous visit which gave the first photos of alive *Consolida samia* plants ever, this visit marked the first time that fruits and seeds were viewed and collected; this collection will hopefully prove valuable to a subsequent, thorough scientific study for taxonomic and physiological purposes (Fig. 3). A careful and ‘thrifty’ collection of mature, open follicles revealed an average of about 10 seeds per fruit; we decided to collect all in all ca 1000 seeds, well below 10% of the seeds available in the field during the team visit, in order not to disturb significantly the natural, reproductive cycle of this annual plant. The seeds (which seem to be larger than expected, Fig. 4) are currently being dried out in our NKUA Seed Bank facilities and will be consequently stored for both long-term preservation and potential conservation initiatives as well.

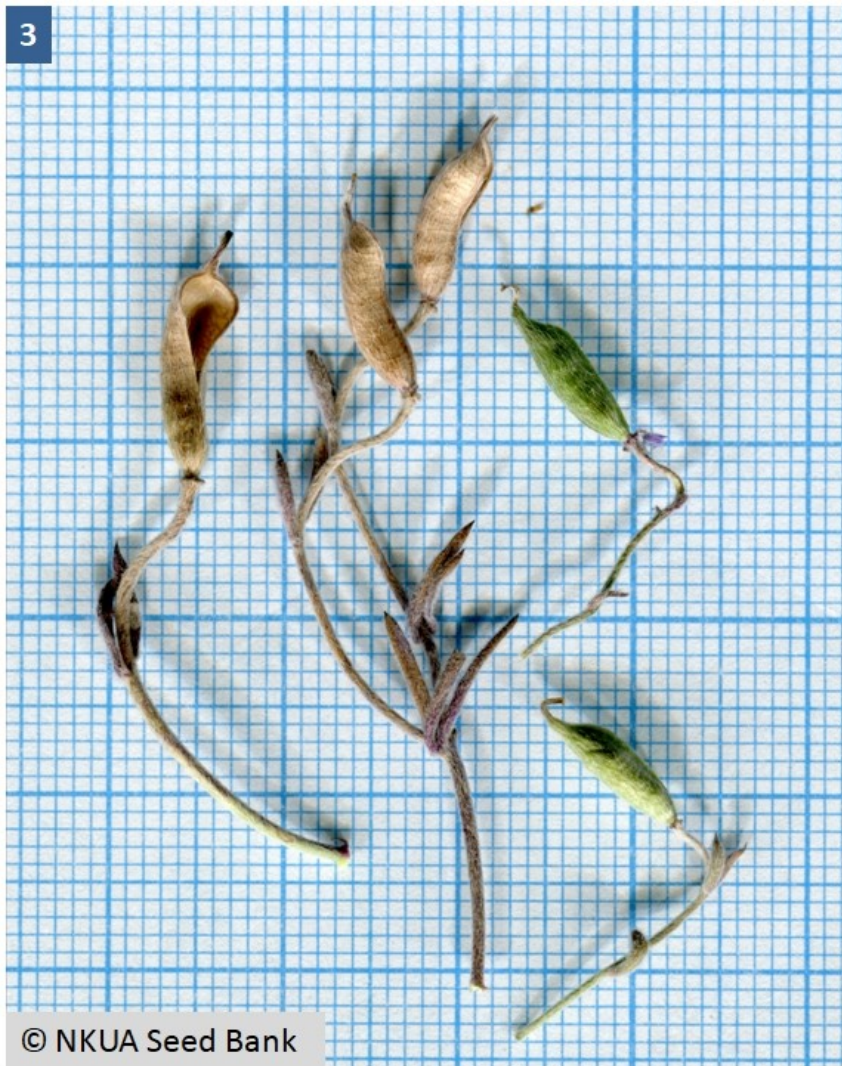


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