

OPTIMA 2026

XVIII. OPTIMA MEETING

The Organization for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area

22 - 26 September 2026
Nevşehir, Cappadocia, TÜRKİYE

ABSTRACT BOOK

EDITORS

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FOREWORD & WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Colleagues and Distinguished Participants,

It is our distinct honor and privilege to welcome you to the official Abstract Book of the 18th OPTIMA Meeting, held in the historic and extraordinary setting of Nevşehir-Cappadocia, Türkiye, from September 22 to 26, 2026.

Since its inauguration in Greece in 1975, the Organization for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area (OPTIMA) has served as an essential international forum for botanists, taxonomists, pharmacognosists, and natural product scientists dedicated to Mediterranean flora. Türkiye has previously had the privilege of hosting this prestigious gathering in Istanbul (1986) and Antalya (2010). Today, we are proud to host the 18th edition in Cappadocia, a region renowned not only for its unique cultural heritage but also for its rich biodiversity.

This year's scientific program reflects the multidisciplinary essence of OPTIMA, bridging traditional botanical taxonomy with cutting-edge pharmacological, chemical, ethnobotanical, and industrial research on medicinal and aromatic plants.

This Abstract Book brings together a remarkable body of scientific work contributed by researchers representing 24 countries across the globe. The volume encompasses:

1 Plenary Lecture, setting the strategic vision for Mediterranean botanical research;

1 Tailored Speech, highlighting milestone achievements in the field;

85 Contributed Keynote and Oral Presentations, showcasing breakthrough findings across diverse disciplines; and

86 Poster Presentations, offering vibrant insights into ongoing research initiatives and innovations.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the members of the International Scientific Committee, the session chairs, and all contributing authors whose dedication and rigorous research made this comprehensive volume possible. We also convey our special thanks to our sponsors, institutional partners, and supporting staff for their unwavering commitment to the success of this congress.

We trust that the abstracts compiled in this book will serve as a valuable reference, inspiring new scientific queries, interdisciplinary collaborations, and lasting international partnerships.

We wish you all a highly engaging, productive, and memorable meeting in Cappadocia.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. K. Hüsnü Can Başer
Prof. Dr. Ferhat Celep
Prof. Dr. Müberra Koşar
Editors of the Abstract Book of 18th OPTIMA Meeting (2026)

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A new record for the A7 Grid Square in the flora of Türkiye: *Centaurea diffusa* (Asteraceae)

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Centaurea diffusa Lam. (Asteraceae) is a species previously reported in the *Flora of Türkiye* from A1(E), A2(E), A2(A), A4 and B2 grid squares in northwestern and western Anatolia [1]. During floristic field studies carried out in Sera Lake Nature Park and its surroundings in Akçaabat district of Trabzon Province, specimens belonging to the genus *Centaurea* were collected and examined. The material was identified as *C. diffusa* based on its diffusely branched habit, divided leaves, numerous small capitula and characteristic involucral bracts. Comparison of the collection data with the distribution records given in the *Flora of Türkiye* showed that no record had previously been provided for the A7 grid square [1]. The present record therefore represents a new grid-square record for A7 and extends the known distribution of the species to the eastern Black Sea region of Türkiye. The finding also indicates that detailed local floristic surveys remain important for detecting overlooked distributional records, even for taxa already known from other parts of the country. This contribution updates the grid-based distribution of *C. diffusa* and provides additional floristic data for the flora of Trabzon and the Black Sea region.

Keywords: A7 grid square, Asteraceae,*Centaurea diffusa*, New record, Trabzon

References:

[1] Wagenitz G (1975). *Centaurea* L. In: Davis PH (ed.), *Flora of Türkiye and the East Aegean Islands*, Vol. 5. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 465-585.