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## Introduction the Potential Wild Plant Species of Iran as a Source of New Ornamentals

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### Abstract

Iran is a great country which harbor more than 8000 plant species. It has one of the richest plant biodiversity in the world which arise from its varied climatic and topographic regions. Hence, it is important to have definite strategies for the conservation and exploitation of these valuable plant germplasm. Certain wild species have the great potential to be used in floriculture industry as this market always sought after the novel cultivar and species with outstanding form, size and colors. Therefore the introduction and the use of native species with valuable ornamental features are of great importance. In this study the preliminary investigation of the flora of Iran resulted in the selection of about 100 candidate species with ornamental potential which later were narrowed to the limited numbers based on their aesthetic and physiological characteristics. Drought tolerance was also considered as one of the main traits beside other criteria like the propagation method, flowering period, life cycle and breeding method. Consequently 20 species which obtained the highest scores among others were chosen for the more extensive research that can lead to the release of new cultivar or species to the market. Currently different research groups from all around Iran are performing initial researches on different aspects of the selected species.

**Keywords:** Native species, Propagation, Breeding, Physiology