

Reports and observations by Stephen Mifsud (MaltaWildPlants.com)

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Report Category : Report of a new species for the Maltese islands

Species : *Amaranthus muricatus* (Gillies ex Moq.) Gillies ex Hieron

Date of Observation : 10th November 2007

Location : Santa Venera

Remarks :

This procumbent annual is quite difficult to identify because it bears inconspicuous flowers and fruit. A large specimen was observed in a waste ground habitat in Santa Venera. *Amaranthus muricatus* is known as African Amaranth, but the name is a misnomer because it originates from South America. This taxon or its synonyms has never been reported in Malta, neither in old floras nor in recent scientific articles, hence this is the first record of this species on our islands. Perhaps it has been introduced during the last half of the 20th century and now has stabilised itself as a casual alien. It is found in several Mediterranean localities (eg Sicily, Spain and North Africa.)



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