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**SCUTELLARIA OREOPHILA (LAMIACEAE): LIFE FORM, SHOOT  
FORMATION, ONTOGENESIS**

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The article presents the results of a detailed description of ontogenesis and developmental features of individuals of a Caucasian endemic *Scutellaria oreophila* L. (Lamiaceae). Based on the study of shoot formation, a biomorphological portrait of the species was established, which characterizes *S. oreophila* as a clearly polycentric sympodially growing long-rhizomatous herbaceous polycarpic, hemicryptophyte, with innovation buds located in the litter or on the soil surface. It has been established that in short-grass alpine meadow the individuals of *S. oreophila* mainly represent an aggregation of clones consisting of different ontogenetic states (*j–ss*). The ontogenesis of individuals is complex and consists of the ontogenesis of a seed individual and of ramets. It was shown that two types of shoots form a perennial structure of adult individuals: long-shoots and rhizome-long-shoots, their role in the formation of the life form is revealed. The long-shoots are mono-dicyclic, vegetative or generative, deploy from the buds of the innovation zone, their role is associated with the formation of partial bushes and the retention of the territory. Rhizome-long-shoots are di-, polycyclic vegetative or generative, formed from dormant buds, their role is associated with the spatial distribution and annexation of the territory.

*Keywords:* life form, ontogenesis, *Scutellaria oreophila*, endemic, Caucasus

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