

# *Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill.- Violaceae : a new record for India

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The present paper reports a new record of *Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill known only from U.S.A recorded for the first time from India. An amplified taxonomic description, distribution, illustration of this newly recorded species are provided.

**Keywords:** *Hybanthus verticillatus*, New record, Red Hills, Tamil Nadu, India.

## Introduction

The genus *Hybanthus* Jacq. has c. 100 species distributed throughout tropics (Mabberley, 2008). In India, 5 species were reported of which the species *H. enneaspermus* (L.) F.Muell. and *H. travancoricus* Melch were included in Flora of Tamil Nadu (Banerjee & Pramanik, 1993) and the third one, *H. vatsavayii* C.S. Reddy was described as a new species much later from Andhra Pradesh (Reddy, 2001) and *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert was reported as a new record to India (Sasi *et al.*, 2011) from Tamilnadu. An Australian species *Hybanthus stellarioides* (Domin) P.I. Forest was reported from Dammiguda hills of Greater Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh as a new distribution record to India by Venkat Ramana *et al.* (2011).

Recently, a species of *Hybanthus* was collected during the floristic studies along slopes of Red Hills near Chennai in Tamil Nadu. On critical examination of literature and authentic herbarium specimens of the genus *Hybanthus* deposited at Madras Herbarium (MH), Botanical Survey Of India, Southern Circle, Coimbatore, it was identified as *Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill.

Review of literature of Flora of Madras (Brown, 1862; Gamble, 1915-1935; Lourdasamy and Mayuranathan, 1929; Barber, 1943; Barnese, 1934; 1938; Lal, 1972; Lal and Livingston, 1978) showed that this species not been recorded from this region so far. Hence, the present collection of *Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill., forms a new distributional record for India.

## Systematic treatment

*Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill., Hist. Pl. 4: 345.1873; *Viola verticillatus* Ortega, Hort. Matr. Dec. 4: 50.1797. *Solea verticillatus* Spreng.



**Fig 1. *Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill. A. Habit; B. Flower; C. Capsule**

in J. Bot. Schard. 1800: 192.1801. *Ionidium polygalifolium* Vent., Jard. Malm. Pl. 27.1803. Type: cultivated plant; *Viola polygalifolia* Poir. in. Lam. Encycl. 8: 648.1808.

Herb, erect, glabrous, 15-18 cm high. Stem, pale green when young, whitish when matured, Leaves simple, alternate, linear-oblong, oblanceolate, entire, sub-glabrous, midrib prominent, minutely mucronate, impressed below, lateral nerves obscure, 1.5-2.5×0.3-0.4 cm; Petiole short c. 0.1 cm; Stipule 2, small, linear, c. 0.1cm; Flower white in axillary, solitary inflorescence; peduncle slender, glabrous, 0.5-0.8 cm long; pedicel short, glabrous 0.2 -0.3cm long. Calyx green, sepals 5, unequal, ovate, glabrous, c.0.3 cm×0.1cm. Corolla bilibed, white, petals 5, unequal, upper white, oblong, 0.4-0.5 cm long, lateral petals, oblong with sharp acute apex, 0.2cm long, lower petals, large, oblong- elliptic 0.8-1×0.3-0.5cm with a limb; stamens 5, filaments free, anterior 2 filaments and posterior 3 filaments, glabrous; style erect and stigma flat. Capsule green, triangle, glabrous. Seeds numerous, white. (Fig: 1&2)

**Flowering & Fruiting:** May-June.

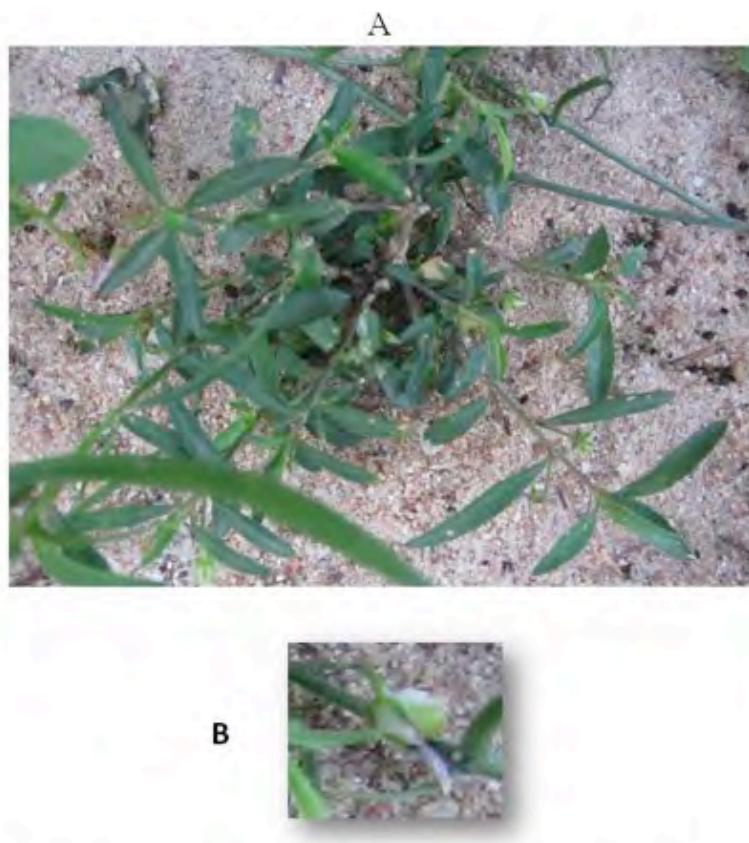
**Habitat:** Pasture and wasteland as weed (between 13°10'00"N latitude and 80°10'17.5E longitude) on Red Hills, Coastal Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

**Distribution:** Mexico in North America and now in India from Red hills of Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

**Uses:** Leaf powder is mixed with cow's milk and given orally to men and women for getting pregnancy.

**Specimens examined:** Tamil Nadu: Chennai, Red hills, 23 June 2012, G. Francy. -111 (BUH). Chennai, Red hills. 2 July 2012, Francy. G- 112 (BUH).

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**Fig 2. *Hybanthus verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill. A. Habit; B. Capsule**

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