

Extended distribution of *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert. (Violaceae) in India

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Abstract

Hybanthus puberulus M. Gilbert, an Ethiopian species, so far known to occur only in the Southern Western Ghats, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka (Mysore). Occurrence in Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu form an additional / extended distribution in India.

Introduction

The genus *Hybanthus* Jacq. with about 100 species is distributed throughout the tropics (Mabberley 2008). During floristic exploration in various parts of Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu, a few specimens of *Hybanthus* were collected from near Thimbam forest and Dottapuram Hills, Thalamalai, Mutheyanur in Sathyamangalam in Erode district in between Karnataka border and Dharmapuri district of Eastern Ghats in Tamil Nadu. On critical examination of specimens deposited in MH, Botanical Survey of India, Southern circle Coimbatore and perusal of literature concerning the genus *Hybanthus*, it was identified as *Hybanthus puberulus* M.G. Gilbert, so far unrecorded from the Eastern Ghats of India hence it is reported here as in addition for extend distribution to India. Recently *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert was reported as a new record to India in Tamil Nadu Coimbatore (Sasi *et al.*, 2011) and also new record to Karnataka (Parthipan and Rajendran 2012). *Hybanthus puberulus* grows intermingled with *H. enneaspermus* and gives the similar appearance, probably due to this, it might have been overlooked and could not be listed by the earlier workers. *Hybanthus puberulus* is closely allied to *H. enneaspermus* but it differs by its dense very short indumentum, which covers all the parts



Fig. 1. Distribution of *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert collected from 1. Maruthamalai Hills, 2. Karnataka, 3. Mutheyanur, 4. Dharmapuri, 5. Thala malai and 6. Dottapuram Hills

including capsule. In *H. enneaspermus* the indumentum is much laxer, usually longer and the capsule is always glabrous (Sasi *et al.*, 2011).

Systematic treatment

***Hybanthus puberulus* M.G. Gilbert** in Nord. J. Bot. 12 (6): 689 - 693. 1992. Sasi *et al.* in Zoo's Print. 26 (12).2011; Parthipan and Rajendran in Zoo's Print. 27(12). 2012 (Fig 1).

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Herbaceous shrubs, much branched, 17–30 cm high; stem green when young, base pinkish woody, hairy. Leaves green above and slightly paler, simple, alternate, clustered at apex, linear to lanceolate, obscurely crenate, mucronate at apex, attenuate at base, hairy, 25–35 X 3–5 mm; stipules linear - lanceolate, densely hairy, gland tipped, c 2 mm long. Flowers pinkish with darker patterns, solitary or in axillary inflorescences; peduncle slender, densely short pubescent, 8–10 mm long; pedicel short, slender, pubescent, 5–7 mm long; bracts triangular, densely pubescent, margins ciliate, c 1 mm long; sepals 5, unequal, ovate - lanceolate, pubescent, c 2 mm long; petals 5, unequal, upper pale pink, oblong, 4 – 5 mm long, lateral petals pale pink, oblong ending in a sharp acute apex, c 3 mm long; lower petals pinkish with darker patterns, enlarged, oblong-elliptic, shortly cuspidate, 10 x 6 – 7 mm along with a limb; stamens 5, filaments free, the anterior 2 filaments with hairy appendages, anthers villous, the posterior 3 filaments and stamens glabrous; pistil 3 mm long, style erect and stigma flat.

Capsules 3- angled, short pubescent c 6 mm long; seeds pale yellow, ellipsoid, ribbed, glabrous, c. 3 mm long.

Flowering and fruiting
July–October.

Distribution
Ethiopia (Sidamo region). In India Maruthamalai hills from Tamil Nadu and Mysore from Karnataka. New distribution for Thimbam forest (Dottapuram Hills, Thalamalai, Mutheyanur) and Dharmapuri in Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu.

Uses
The attractive flower structure and fascinating pinkish colour can be recommended to grow as an ornamental plant in residents, park and also in rock gardens (Parthipan and Rajendran 2012).

Specimen examined
Thimbam forest (Dottapuram Hills, Thalamalai, Mutheyanur) 22 Jan. 2013. *Parthipan*. M 320 (BUH). Dharmapuri in Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu 25 Jan .2013. *Sasi, R.* 380 (BUH).

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