

# Strawberry Groundcherry

*Physalis pruinosa* L. (Solanaceae) —  
A new addition to the flora of Odisha



## Angiospermae

[Large group of flowering plants]

## Solanales

[Order of dicotyledonous flowering plants]

## Solanaceae

[Family of Nightshade Plants]

## *Physalis pruinosa*

[Strawberry Groundcherry]

Species described by  
Linnaeus in 1758

The genus *Physalis* L. comprises about 100 species, most of which find distributed new world tropics, especially in Mexico and Guatemala; some extended to temperate regions and a few are known from central America, Eurasia, Australia and the Old World. According to Deb (1979), six species of *Physalis* occur in India—*alkekengi* L., *angulata* L., *ixocarpa* Brot. ex DC., *longifolia* Nutt., *peruviana* L., and *minima* L.

Till date only two species of the genus *Physalis* have been reported from Odisha—*minima* L. and *peruviana* L. (Saxena & Brahmam, 1990).

The state of Odisha situated on the eastern coast of India is bestowed with varied physiographic conditions, moderately high rainfall, relative humidity and a fine network of perennial rivers which provides congenial conditions for rich floristic diversity. More than 3000 species of plants have been recorded from the state so far (Dash et al. 2015). This includes angiosperms, pteridophytes and gymnosperms which represents 20 percent of the total floristic elements of India.

During an exploration trip in September 2016 under the project 'Ethnobotany of Nuapada District', an interesting *Physalis* species was collected from the footpath of Gudbeli, Khariar, Nuapada District located between 20°14'43" N & 82°45'05" E at 268m. After a critical scrutiny with the original description and the relevant literature its identity has been confirmed as *Physalis pruinosa* L. A detailed description, accompanied with photographs, is provided to authenticate the new record and facilitate its easy identification. The voucher specimen of the same is deposited at the Herbarium of the Central Botanical Laboratory, BSI, Howrah.

Thorough perusal of all the relevant literature (Saxena & Brahmam 1995; Dash et al. 2015) it was revealed that this species has not been reported from Odisha so far. The present finding is, therefore, the first record of this species for Odisha. This species was first time reported in India from

Rajasthan (Singh & Pandey 2002). Later distributional records showed its migration from Rajasthan to the neighbouring states like, Andhra Pradesh (Raju et al. 2007), Maharashtra (Somkunwar et al. 2014), Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand (Singh & Datt 2014) Madhya Pradesh (Meena 2015) and Tamil Nadu (Ramalingum & Kalidas 2015).

### ***Physalis pruinosa* L.**

Sp. Pl. 184. 1753; Martinez in Taxon 42: 104. 1993. Type: Mexico: Herb. Linn.no. 247.13 (HT: LINN).

*Physalis maxima* Mill., Gard. Dict. ed. 8, Physalisno. 15. 1768; Gentry & Standley in Flora Guatemala 10: 90. 1974; Ganapathi et al. in Cytologia 56: 285. 1991; Singh & Pandey in Indian J. Forestry 25: 187. 2002. Type: Mexico. Veracruz, Houstouns.n. (BM-SL).Vern.:Lutuputu

Description: Annual, erect, branched herb, up to 1.5 m tall, villous-viscid pubescent all over. Stem terete with sticky hairs. Leaves simple, alternate, 3-20 x 2-15 cm, broadly ovate, base cordate, margins sinuate dentate to shallowly angulate-lobed, apex acute; leaf surface pubescent on both side, midrib and lateral nerves prominently raised beneath. Petiole hairy, up to 15 cm long. Flowers axillary, solitary, up to 1.5 cm across, yellow to dirty white or creamish-white. Calyx campanulate, hairy on outer surface, glabrous beneath; fruiting calyx larger than flowering, 4-6 x 2-4 cm, bladder like, strongly 5-angled with five short ridges

between the expanded angles, reticulately veined, pubescent. Corolla 5-lobed, 1-1.8 x 1.8 cm, campanulate. Stamens 5; filaments up to 5mm long, attached to the base of corolla tube, glabrous; anthers oblong, yellow, basifixed, glabrous, dehisce by lateral slits. Ovary globose to oblong; style terminal, up to 4mm long, terminated by obscurely 2-lobed, stigma green. Berries 1-2 cm across, globose or globose oblong, green, turning dirty yellow on maturity, many seeded, enclosed within the inflated calyx. Seeds minute, obovoid to sub-orbicular, shining, white, granulate.

Field note: Rapidly spreading weed along bunds of rice fields and along foot path during August- September.

Fl. & Fr.: August - December.

Specimen Examined: 39261 (Central Botanical Laboratory, BSI), India, Odisha, Nuapada Dist., Dwajhar, coll. H. Singh, R. Saravanan & P. A. Dhole

Distribution: Mexico and Central America; introduced into tropical Asia; India: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and Nuapada district of Odisha (Current report).

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