

# ***Hybanthus stellarioides* (Domin) P. I. Forster (Violaceae) - a new record for Karnataka**

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## **Abstract**

During the extensive survey of medicinal plant collection on the hill tops of Saudatti region, *Hybanthus stellarioides* (Domin) P.I. Forster plant has been collected. Review of literature revealed that the species has not been recorded so far in Karnataka. The description, distribution, ecology and phenological data of the plant are provided.

## **Introduction**

Genus *Hybanthus* Jarg. with about 100 species is distributed in tropics (Mabberly, 2008). In India six species occur of which *H. enneaspermus* (L.) F. Muell. is widely distributed and *H. travancoricus* (Beddome) Melchior is endemic to Southern parts of Western Ghats (Banerjee and Pramanik, 1993). *H. vatsavayii* is a new species described by Reddy (2001) from Andhra Pradesh. *H. puberulus* M. Gilbert from Tamil Nadu (Sasi *et al.*, 2011), *H. stelleroidies* (Domin) P.I. Forster from Andhra Pradesh (Ramana *et al.*, 2011) and *H. verticillatus* (Ortega) Baill from Red Hills in Tamil Nadu (Francisca *et al.*, 2013) are the new records to India. Subsequent to the discovery of *H. stelleroidies* its extended distribution in Maharashtra was reported by Kamble, *et al.* (2014). During an extensive survey of medicinal plants on the hill tops in Belgaum district, Karnataka, we collected this species at Saudatti region. The prepared voucher specimen is deposited in Herbarium, P.G. Department of Botany, Karnatak University, Dharwad.

## ***Hybanthus stellarioides* (Fig. 1&2)**

*Hybanthus stellarioides* (Domin) P.I. Forster, Mulleria 8(1): 18.1993. (Violaceae)

*H. enneaspermus* var. *stellarioides* Domin, Bibl. Bot. 89 (4): 983. 1928. *H. enneaspermus* subsp. *stellarioides* (Domin) E.M. Benn., Nuytsia 1 (3): 229. 1972.

## **Description**

A small erect, unbranched or rarely branched seasonal herb, growing to a height up to 30cm, covered with spreading hairs. Leaves simple, alternate, subsessile, 1.2–8 x 0.2–0.8 cm, linear lanceolate, base attenuate, apex acute, margin entire, distantly denticulate; mid vein prominent, lateral veins obscure; stipules small, to 1 mm long, margins hairy. Flowers solitary axillary, stalk up to 9 mm long, filiform, jointed, peduncle divaricate and pedicel curved and drooping. Sepals 5, linear-lanceolate, unequal, uninerved, slightly keeled, hairy mostly on the keels. Petals 5, highly unequal, the upper two small, recurved, pale, the laterals falcate, pale, the lower biggest, clawed, limb 5 x 12 mm broadly much enlarged, orange with 3 central long



**Fig. 1. *Hybanthus stellarioides* (Domin) P. I. Forster A. Habitat, B. Habit**

and 2 lateral small deep coloured veins which produce dichotomously branched lateral nerves running almost to the margin, limb with a white blotch at base near the claw, stamens 5, didynamous, filaments of two stamens with hairy appendages below, connective distinctly prolonged beyond anthers, pistil 3–4 mm long; ovary superior, ovoid, 6–12 ovules; stigma spathulate. Capsule ovoid, three angled when mature, 5–8 x 3–5 mm, 4–10 seeded.

## **Flowering and Fruiting**

During rains, between July and September.

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**Fig. 2. *Hybanthus stellarioides* (Domin) P. I. Forster**  
C. Flower, D. Capsule

#### Habitat

The plant grows in the crevices of sand stone rocks on the flat hill tops at Saudatti (15°47' N latitude and 75° 07' E. longitude, 610 m above mean sea level). This region is towards north of Karnataka and receives an average rainfall of 500mm / annum. This plant is very much eaten by sheep and goats.

#### Discussion

Forster (1993) mentioned that the species is common in sandy or rocky soils in *Eucalyptus* dominated open forests of western (coastal) Australia and grows from near sea level up to 500 m. The colour of the petal is orange. Subsequently it has been recorded from various regions of Australia, up to 1000 m mostly in rocky places and the color of petal ranges from yellow to orange (Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants, 2010). Ramana, *et al.* (2011) and Kamble *et al.* (2014.) also found this plant in rock crevices and reported orange coloured petals. This confirms that *H. stellarioides* prefers rocky habitats on the hills in

less rainfall zones and the Indian plants produce orange flower. Present report from Saudatti in Karnataka makes the extended distribution of the species in the southern part of Western India.

#### Exsiccate

Saudatti hill top near Navilatirtha dam, July, 2015. LCK/GRH. 13.

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