

FALSE IRONWORT

Hyptis capitata: a new flora record for Tamil Nadu, India



Flowering twig of *Hyptis capitata* in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu. Photo: S. Jagathes Kumar

IUCN Red List:
Not Assessed

Magnoliopsida

[Class of Dicotyledonous plants]

Lamiales

[Order of flowering plants]

Lamiaceae

[Family of mints]

Hyptis capitata

[False Ironwort]

Species described by
Jacq.

Lamiaceae is one of the largest families of flowering plants, consisting of 250 genera and about 7,200 species distributed throughout the world. The subtribe Hyptidinae of Lamiaceae consists of seven genera, of which *Hyptis* is the largest with over 300 species (Harley 1988). In India, *Hyptis* is represented by four species (Mukerjee 1940). In Tamil Nadu, two species, namely, *H. pectinata* and *H. suaveolens*, were reported (Henry et al. 1987). The present collection of *Hyptis capitata* forms an addition to the flora of Tamil Nadu.

Hyptis capitata Jacq. Icon. Pl. Rar. 1: 11. T. 114. 1781-86; Benth. in DC. Prodr. 12: 106. 1848; Mukerjee, Rec. Bot. Surv. India. 14: 63. 1940; Varghese, J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 76: 200. 1979; Sivarajan et al., J. Econ. Taxon. Bot. 7: 224-225. 1985; Mandar et al., Ind. J. For. 30(3): 355-356. 2007.

Undershrubs up to 1m high. Stem profusely branched, quadrangular, shallowly furrowed on the sides. Leaves c. 15cm×8cm, broadly ovate-elliptic, serrate at margins, acute at apex, hairy on both surfaces; petioles up to 5cm long. Inflorescence of axillary or terminal, globose heads, c. 2–3 cm across; upper flowering heads smaller c. 1–2 cm across; lower fruiting heads larger, c. 2–4 cm across. Peduncles 3–6 cm long. Bracts 7–8, ovate-oblong, acute, long ciliate along margins at the base. Calyx tubular, tube 1–3 mm long, lobes five, c. 1.5mm across, equal, linear, margin slightly hirsute. Corolla white, 3–3.5 mm long, tube 2mm long, upper lip two-lobed, lobes broader, lower three-lobed, lobes narrow, middle lobe large, deflexed, obtuse at apex, ciliate on the ventral side, side two-lobed, lobes small, acute at apex. Stamens four, didynamous, slightly exerted,

Global Distribution:

Native: Florida, Mexico, Central America, the West Indies and South America.
Naturalized: Australia, Southeast Asia, some tropical islands and India (Kerala, Goa and Tamil Nadu)

filaments c. 1mm long, anther locules confluent. Style glabrous, c. 4mm long; stigma bifid. Nutlets four, elliptic-ovoid, subtrigonus, reddish-brown, c. 0.7mm across.

Flowering and fruiting:

September–January.

Habitat: Very rarely found in

rocky areas of Bhavani riverside near Vajinampalayam Village, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu.

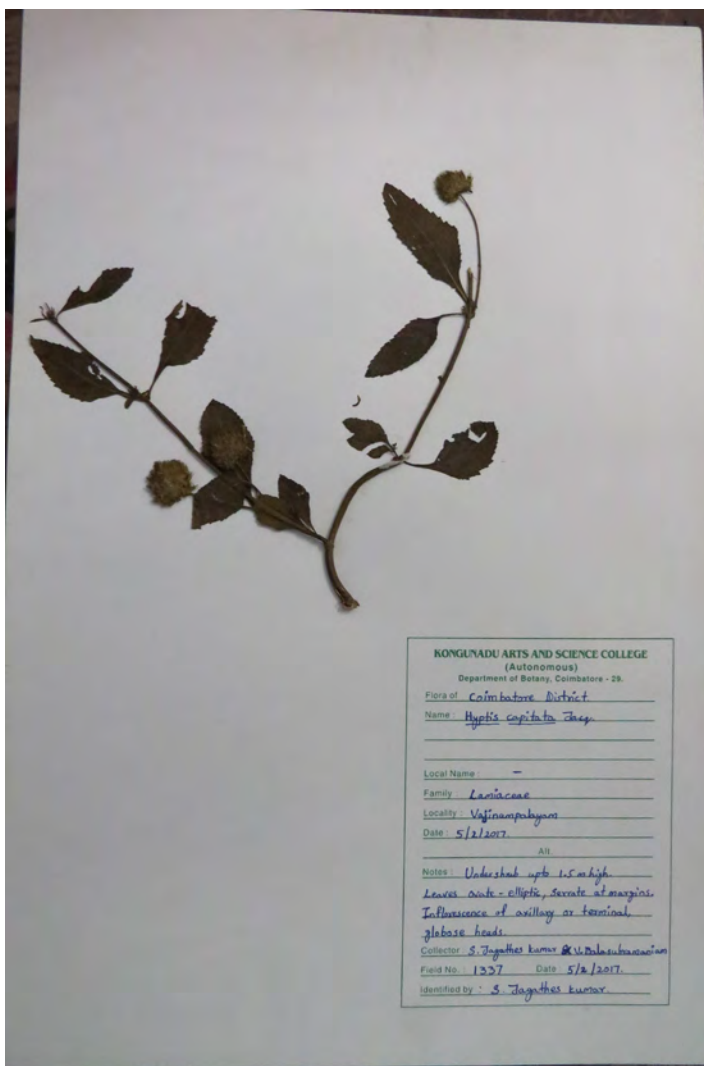
Specimen examined:

1337 (KASCH), 05.ii.2017, India, Tamil Nadu, Coimbatore District, Vajinampalayam, coll. S. Jagathes Kumar & V. Balasubramaniam (11.3371 N & 76.9831 E).

Global Distribution: It is

native to Florida, Central America, the West Indies and South America but naturalized in Australia, Southeast Asia and some tropical islands.

In India: Kerala, Goa and Tamil Nadu.



Herbarium sheet of *Hyptis capitata* (1337 KASCH)

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