

# *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert. (Violaceae) – A new record for India

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## Introduction

The genus *Hybanthus* Jacq. has about 100 species distributed throughout tropics (Mabberley 2008). In India four species were reported; two of them namely, *H. enneaspermus* (L.) F. Muell. and *H. travancoricus* Melch. were included in the Flora of India (Banerjee & Pramanik 1993). Among the other two, *H. vatsavayii* C.S. Reddy was described as a new species and addition to the Indian flora (Reddy, 2001) and *H. stellarioides* (Domin) P.I. Forst., was collected from Hyderabad and described as a new distributional record to India by Venkat Ramana *et al.* (2011). Recently, a species of *Hybanthus* was collected during the floristic studies of Maruthamalai hills of the Southern Western Ghats, Tamil Nadu, India. On critical examination and perusal of literature concerning the genus *Hybanthus*, it was identified as *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert, so far known to occur only in Ethiopia (Gilbert, 1992). The present collection of *Hybanthus puberulus*, therefore forms a new distributional record for India. A short description of the plant is given along with illustration below.

***Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert** in Nord. J. Bot. 12(6): 689 - 693. 1992. Herbaceous shrubs, much branched, 17 - 30cm high; stem green when young, base pinkish woody, hairy. Leaves green above and slightly paler beneath, simple, alternate, clustered at apex, linear to lanceolate, obscurely crenate, mucronate at apex, attenuate at base, hairy, 25 - 35 X 3 - 5mm; stipules linear - lanceolate, densely hairy, gland tipped, ca 2mm long. Flowers pinkish with darker patterns, solitary, axillary inflorescence; peduncle slender, densely short pubescent, 8 - 10mm long; pedicel short, slender, pubescent, 5 - 7mm long; bracts triangular, densely pubescent, margins ciliate, ca 1mm long; sepals 5, unequal, ovate - lanceolate, pubescent, ca 2mm long; petals 5, unequal, upper pale pink, oblong, 4 - 5mm long, lateral petals pale pink, oblong ending in a sharp acute apex, ca 3mm long; lower petals pinkish with darker patterns, enlarged, oblong- elliptic, shortly cuspidate, 10 x 6 - 7mm 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 3mm long, style erect and stigma flat. Capsules 3- angled, short pubescent ca 6mm long; seeds pale yellow, ellipsoid, ribbed, glabrous, ca 3mm long.

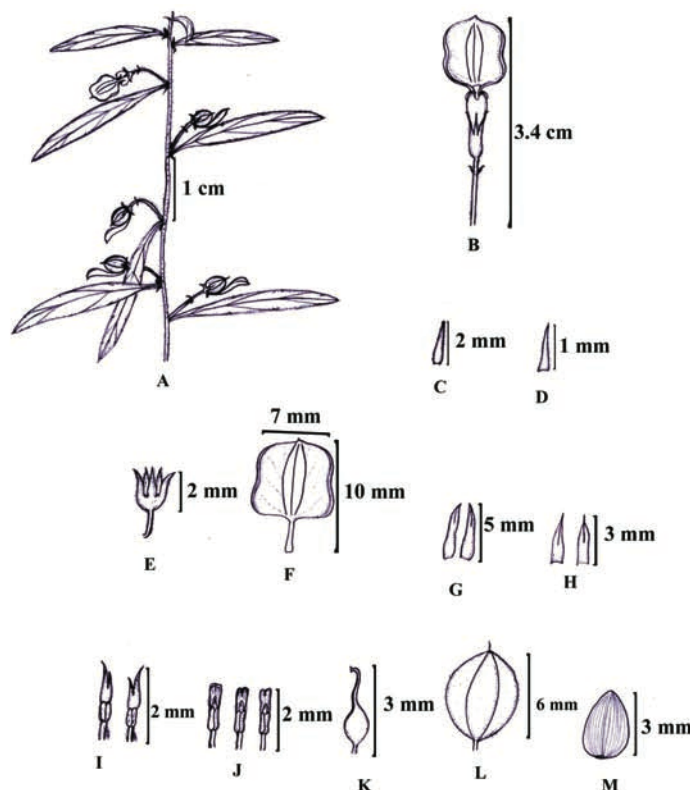
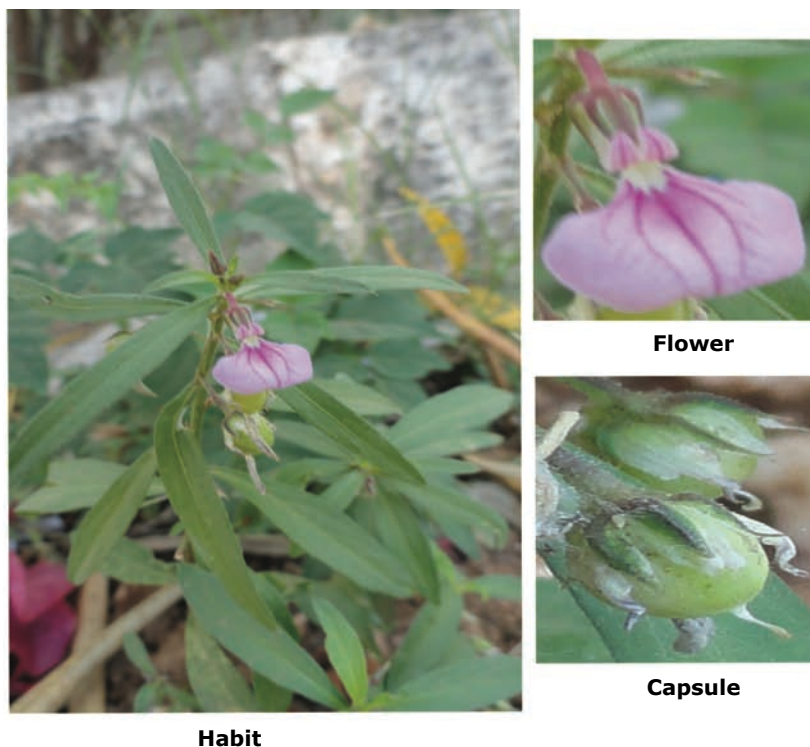


Fig: 1 *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert.

A. Habit, B. Flower, C. Stipule, D. Bract, E. Calyx, F. Lower petal, G. Upper petals, H. Lateral petals, I-J Stamens, K. Pistil, L. Capsule, M. Seed



Habit

Fig: 2 *Hybanthus puberulus* M. Gilbert.

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**Flowering and fruiting:** July-October.

**Ecology:** Growing along the footpath, especially under bushes, between 430 - 480m altitudes on Maruthamalai hills, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, India.

**Distribution:** Ethiopia (Sidamo region), probably recently introduced into India in the state of Tamil Nadu.

**Specimen examined:** India: Tamil Nadu, Coimbatore District, Maruthamalai. *Sasi, Sivalingam & Rajendran*, 006154 (BH).

**Conclusion:** *Hybanthus puberulus* is closely allied to *H. enneaspermus* but it differs by its dense very short indumentum, which covers all the parts including capsule. In *H. enneaspermus* the indumentum is much laxer, usually

longer and the capsule is always glabrous. The *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.

#### References

- Banerjee, S.P. & B.B. Pramanik (1993).** Violaceae. In: Sharma, B.D. & N.P. Balakrishnan (Ed.), *Flora of India*. Vol. 1. *Papaveraceae - Caryophyllaceae*. *Botanical Survey of India*, Calcutta. Pp. 343 - 345.
- Gilbert, M.G. (1992).** Notes on Violaceae from Ethiopia. *Nord. J. Bot.* 12: 689 - 693.
- Mabberley, D.J. (2008).** *Mabberley's Plant-Book*, A portable dictionary of plants, their classification and uses. Third Edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

**Reddy, C.S. (2001).** *Hybanthus vatsavayii* (Violaceae): A new species from Andhra Pradesh, India. *J. Econ. Taxon. Bot.* 25: 219 - 220.

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## Announcement

### National Conference on 'Biodiversity Assessment, Conservation and Utilization' during 9-11 Feb 2012

Department of Biodiversity, Abasaheb Garware College, Pune is organizing a **National Conference on 'Biodiversity Assessment, Conservation and Utilization' during 9-11 Feb 2012** under the chairmanship of renowned ecologist **Prof. Madhav Gadgil**. In connection with this a theme based nature photography competition and exhibition named 'Wild Reflections' has also been organized.

The conference will be a treat for all biology lovers as it will feature invited talks by eminent speakers like **Prof. K.N.Ganeshiah, Prof. R. Umashaanker, Dr. R.J.Ranjit Daniels, Dr. Darshan Shankar** etc. and provides opportunity to share ideas, interact and establish links.

Further details about the 'themes, registration etc.', can be found on departmental website ([www.mesbiodiversity.in](http://www.mesbiodiversity.in))

Please note that the deadline for submission of abstracts is rescheduled to 30 December, 2011.

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