

***Acanthophippium* (Orchidaceae), a generic record for Andhra Pradesh, India**

K. Prasad¹ *

¹Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board, Opp. Nagarjuna University, Guntur-522 510, Andhra Pradesh, India.

*Corresponding author: prasad.orchids@gmail.com

Abstract

Acanthophippium bicolor has been collected for the first time from Galikonda hills of Andhra Pradesh and forms a new generic record for orchid flora of that location (Eastern Ghats). Brief description, phenology, distribution pattern and photographs are provided for the species.

Résumé

Acanthophippium bicolor a été collecté pour la première fois dans les collines Galikonda de l'Andhra Pradesh et forme un nouvel enregistrement générique pour la flore d'orchidées de cet endroit (Eastern Ghats). Une brève description, la phénologie, la distribution et des photographies sont fournies pour l'espèce.

Keywords: *Acanthophippium bicolor*, Eastern Ghats, Galikonda hills, Visakhapatnam.

Mots clés : *Acanthophippium bicolor*, collines de Galikonda, Ghâts orientaux, Visakhapatnam.

Introduction

The genus *Acanthophippium* Blume (1825: 353) is widely distributed in Tropical & Subtropical Asia to SW. Pacific and comprises 13 species in the world (POWO, 2022), of which 3 species were recorded in India, *A. bicolor* Lindley (1835: t. 1730), *A. striatum* Lindley (1838: 41) and *A. sylhetense* Lindley (1833: 177) (Singh *et al.*, 2019). Under a SERB-DST sponsored programme on South Indian genus *Habenaria*, I collected one *Acanthophippium* species from Galikonda hills, Andhra Pradesh. After a critical examination of the specimens, they were identified as *Acanthophippium bicolor* (Prasad *et al.*, 2019; Singh *et al.*, 2019). Thorough perusal of relevant literature (Prasad *et al.*, 2019; Pullaiah, 2018) revealed that this genus was not reported from Andhra Pradesh. This find represents a new generic record for orchid flora of the state.

Taxonomic treatment

Acanthophippium bicolor Lindley, *Edwards's Botanical Register* 20: t. 1730 (1835); Hooker f., *Flora of British India* 5: 815 (1890); Fischer, *Flora of the Presidency of Madras* 3: 1426 (1928); Misra, *Orchids of Orissa* 487 (2004); Prasad *et al.*, *Orchids of Eastern Ghats* 36 (2019); Singh *et al.*, *Orchids of India* 39 (2019).

Specimen Examined: India, Andhra Pradesh, Visakhapatnam district, Galikonda hills, 18° 16' 15.86"N and 82° 58' 53.09"E, 1339 m, 23-09-2014, K. Prasad 6422 (BSID).

Description (Fig. 1): Terrestrial robust herb with green pseudobulbs. Pseudobulbs crowded, fleshy, smooth, narrowly conical, ca. 8 × 2.5 cm, plurinodal, with persisting scales or fibrous sheaths. Leaves 2, unequal (one large and one small), broadly elliptic, 12–20 × 5–8 cm, apex acute, strongly veined underneath, base narrowed into a petiole. Inflorescence lateral from the axil of the imbricating scaly sheaths at base, erect, ca. 5 cm high; peduncle terete, with two ovate sterile bracts at basal region; rachis with 2 or 3 flowers. Floral bracts as long as or longer than the ovary, cymbiform, ovate-lanceolate, 2.1–2.5 × 1–1.2 cm, acute, pale maroon. Pedicel with ovary subcylindric, curved, 2–2.5 cm long. Flowers like broad gibbous-based jugs, light yellow purplish-red, with pink dots, fleshy. Sepals fusing

to form a pitcher-like sepaline tube; dorsal sepal oblong, *ca.* 2.5×1.4 cm, subacute, apex recurved, 7-veined; lateral sepals as long as or broader than dorsal sepal, fused with the foot along their inner edges forming the base of the pitcher, obliquely oblong, *ca.* 3×2.2 cm, obtuse, apex recurved, 7-veined. Petals free, erect, spatulate, *ca.* 2.4×1.2 cm, obtuse, 5-veined. Lip included in sepaline tube, small, strongly reflexed, hatchet-shaped, *ca.* 15×12.5 mm, margins rolled in, 3-lobed; lateral lobes erect, rounded; midlobe recurved, oblong-spathulate, obtuse, apex reflexed; disc with 3 coarsely dentate keels; midlobe and keels deep yellow. Column subcylindric, *ca.* 1.4 cm long, winged; foot long, strongly inflexed from about the middle, flat. Anther obovate in outline. Pollinia 8, in 2 groups of 4, one pair of each bundle smaller, yellow, oblong-ovoid, *ca.* 5 mm long, each group attached to a sticky viscidium by a broad caudicle. Stigma oval; rostellum broad and short, recurved. Capsules ellipsoid.

Flowering and fruiting: May-June.

Habitat: It was growing in moist deciduous forest in edges of perennial streams, in dense shade places, at an elevation range of above 1000 m, the soil type is sandy-black.

Distribution: India (Andhra Pradesh (Galikonda hills), Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka); and Sri Lanka.

Conservation notes: In the present survey I have noticed not more than 20 individuals in one location in Galikonda hills of Andhra Pradesh. The habitat is prone to forest plantations and forest fires. During the present study, the plant was not found in other forests in Andhra Pradesh regions.

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Fig. 1: *Acanthophippium bicolor* Lindley, A. habit - B. flower front view - C. flower seen at 45°

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