

SHORT COMMUNICATION

***Ecbolium viride* (Forssk.) Alston var. *chandrasedkariana* Remadevi & Binojk. (Ruellieae: Acanthaceae): A new report for Tamil Nadu**

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ABSTRACT

The present paper records the occurrence of *Ecbolium viride* var. *chandrasedkariana* Remadevi & Binojk. (Acanthaceae) from Tamil Nadu. Earlier this species was known to occur in Kerala. A detailed description, phenology and photographs are provided for easy identification of the taxa.

KEYWORDS: Acanthaceae, *Ecbolium*, New report, Tamil Nadu

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Introduction

The family Acanthaceae consists of approximately 229 genera and 3450 species (Mabberley 2008). It is widespread in tropical regions but more sparingly distributed in temperate areas. Karthikeyan *et al.* (2009) reported 47 genera, 475 species and 118 varieties of Acanthaceae in India. In Tamil Nadu, it is represented by 51 genera and 191 species (Kumari, 1987), of which *Andrographis lobelioides*, *A. rothii*, *A. rotundifolius*, *Barleria pilosa*, *Diotocanthus albiflorus*, *Hemigraphis venosa* (now *Strobilanthes venosus*), *Hygrophila thymus*, *Neuracanthus neesianus*, *Rungia latior* var. *anamalayana* (now *Justicia latior* var. *anamalayana*), *Santapaua madurensis* (now *Hygrophila madurensis*), *Stenosiphonium wightii* (now *Strobilanthes wightii*), *Strobilanthes boluampattianus*, *S. humilis* and *S. matthewiana* are strict endemic species of Tamil Nadu (Chithra & Nair, 1999; Singh *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, *Neuracanthus neesianus*, *H. venosa* and *S. boluampattianus* are known only by type collection (Srivastava *et al.*, 2015; Venu & Daniel, 2003; Venu 2006). After the publication of Acanthaceae of Tamil Nadu (Kumari, 1987), various workers have added several taxa of Acanthaceae either as new taxa or as new records to Tamil Nadu (Carine *et al.*, 2004; Chandrabose & Chandrasekaran, 1987; Giri & Banerjee, 1989; Gnanasekaran *et al.*, 2016; Kottaimuthu *et al.*, 2014; Mathew *et al.*, 2016; Matthew, 1999; Murugan & Gopalan, 2005; Murugan & Murthy, 2012; Scotland, 1998; Venu, 2006; Vijaya Sankar & Ravikumar, 2004; Vijaya Sankar *et al.*, 2004).

During systematic studies on Acanthaceae of Madurai District, we have collected interesting specimens of *Ecbolium* from the waste lands of Saraswathi Narayanan College and its environs. Critical study with pertinent literature (Remadevi & Binojkumar, 2001 & 2009) has confirmed it as *Ecbolium viride* (Forssk.) Alston var. *chandrasedkariana* Remadevi & Binojk. and it was previously known to be endemic to the state of Kerala (Karthikeyan *et al.*, 2009; Nayar *et al.*, 2006 & 2014; Sasidharan *et al.*, 2004). Scrutiny of floristic literature reveals that the variety has never been reported from flora of Tamil Nadu (Kumari, 1987; Manickam *et al.*, 2003; Matthew, 1983 & 1989). Therefore, our collection represents a new record to the Acanthaceae of Tamil Nadu. The herbarium specimens are deposited in the Thiagarajar College Herbarium (TCH), Madurai.

Taxonomic Treatment

Ecbolium viride (Forssk.) Alston var. *chandrasedkariana* Remadevi & Binojk. in J. Econ. Taxon. Bot. 25(1): 236. 2001; Karthik. & al., Fl. Pl. India: 14. 2009.

Shrubs, up to 1.5m high; branchlets acutely 4-angular, thinly pubescent, ribbed. Leaves simple, opposite-decussate, ovate or broadly ovate-elliptic, 8-13 x 3-6 cm, base attenuate, margin wavy, minutely ciliate, apex acute or obtusely acuminate, lateral veins 5-7 pairs; petiole 5-8 mm long. Inflorescence terminal spikes up to 2.5 cm long; bracts ovate or ovate-elliptic up to 1.5- 2 cm long, distinctly



Figure 1. *Ecbolium viride* var. *chandrasekariana*. A. Flowering twig, B. Flowers close-up, C. Calyx, D. Corolla close-up, E. Fruting spike, F. Capsule close-up.

nerved, pubescent. Sepals 5, lanceolate, glandular-pubescent, 5-6 mm long, acuminate at apex. Corolla bilipped; corolla tube 3.5 cm long, puberulous, lobes ovate, yellow. Stamens 2, exerted. Ovary ovoid or oblong-ellipsoid, 2-3 mm long, glabrous; styles up to 2.7 cm long,

glabrous, stigma terminal. Capsules ovoid, 2.5-3.5 cm long, narrowed at base, compressed, pubescent.

Flowering & Fruiting
November–January.

Distribution

INDIA (Kerala & Tamil Nadu), Endemic.

Specimens examined

India: Tamil Nadu, Madurai District, Saraswathi Narayanan College campus, 01.01.2018, *R. Kottaimuthu* 30 (TCH); road sides, on way to Perungudi from S.N. College, 15.02.2018, *C. P. Muthupandi* 57 (TCH).

Taxonomic note

Vollesen (1989) placed many varieties in the synonymy of *E. viride* because none of the differences between them appeared to be discontinuous and concepts of this complex had always been rather vague. But the variety *chandrsekariana* can easily be delimited from its allies by its yellow corolla (vs. bluish or greenish corolla in *Ecbolium viride*), corolla tube >2.7 cm long (vs. corolla tube < 2.5 cm long) and spikes < 4 cm long (vs. spikes > 6 cm long).

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