

Ceropegia lucida – rediscovery and new distribution record for Arunachal Pradesh, India

The genus *Ceropegia* L. is represented by 244 taxa worldwide¹. They are distributed in the Old World ranging from Southeast Asia, India, Madagascar, Tropical Arabia, Canary Islands and Africa, except the Mediterranean region, New Guinea and Northern Australia². There are 59 taxa of *Ceropegia* in India³. Majority of the *Ceropegia* species are rare in occurrence.

While surveying Namdhapha National Park, Arunachal Pradesh, India, interesting specimens of *Ceropegia* were seen and photographed. After consulting the protologue⁴ and relevant literature^{5,6}, they were identified as *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. Wallich described this species based on the collection from Sylhet, Bangladesh. Subsequently, the species was reported from Meghalaya (Khasia hills), Assam (Cachar) and Burma (Prome) by Hooker & Thomson, Keenam and Wallich respectively. King collected this species from Sikkim in 1874. This specimen (King 2430) is available in CAL (Central National Herbarium, Botanical Survey of India, Howrah, India). After King's collection from Sikkim, there is no recent collection of the species from India. Though Nautiyal⁷ reported *C. lucida* from Sikkim, it is misidentification of *Ceropegia longifolia*. Nayar and Sastry⁸ reported it as endangered or possibly extinct in India and further stated that 'there seems to be no collection of this species made in India in the present century'.

Therefore, in this study *C. lucida* has been rediscovered after a gap of about 142 years. This also forms an addition to the flora of Arunachal Pradesh as it has

not been reported by Giri *et al.*⁹. A colour photograph of the species is also provided to facilitate the identification.

Ceropegia lucida Wall. is a perennial, extensive twinning herbs⁴. Stem sparsely hairy–glabrous. Leaves simple, opposite–decussate, exstipulate, petiolate; petiole 0.8–1 cm long, slender, pilose; leaf lamina 7–9 cm long, elliptic–lanceolate, oblong–lanceolate, acute–acuminate at apex, narrowed at base, slightly fleshy, dark green above, pale below, glabrous, ciliolate along margin. Inflorescence extra-axillary, 4–6-flowered umbellate cymes; peduncle c. 2 cm long, puberulous, fleshy. Flowers yellowish-green with purple spots, pedicellate; pedicel 1–1.8 cm long, terete, glabrous. Calyx 5-partite, sepals linear–subulate, glabrous. Corolla 1.8–2.7 cm long; corolla tube 1.2–2.5 cm long, cylindrical throughout, hardly dilated at base, cylindrical, funnel-shaped at throat, with ring of hairs at the throat of dilated part. Corolla lobes 0.7–2.5 cm long (Figure 1), greenish-yellow blotched with purple, broadly or elliptic–oblong, spatulate, connate at the tip, translucent hairy along margins at upper half, hairs are considerably long. Corona biseriate, outer corona with five shortly bifid-deltoid lobes, ciliate along margin; inner corona of 5 erecto-divergent linear–clavate, lobes. Flowering of the species starts in September and lasts up to November. Other than Arunachal Pradesh it has been reported from Meghalaya, Sikkim, Assam, Bangladesh, Burma, Malaysia and Thailand (Siam). The specific epithet '*lucida*' is due to the bright green coloured leaves of the species.



Figure 1. *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. in the field.

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DHARMENDRA KHANDAL¹
SUSHANT MORE²
GAURAV KATARIA³
SHARAD KAMBALE^{4,*}

¹Tiger Watch, Maa Farm, Sherpur Khiljipur 322 001, India

²Elphinstone College, 156, MG Road, Fort, Mumbai 400 032, India

³AE Travels Pvt Ltd, 47, IIIrd Floor, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi 110 025, India

⁴Department of Botany, Maratha Vidya Prasarak Samaj's Arts, Commerce & Science College, Tryambakeshwar, Nashik 422 212, India

*For correspondence.
e-mail: skambalesu@gmail.com