

A rare incidence of polypetalae in *Convolvulus arvensis* L. (Convolvulaceae)

The genus *Convolvulus* represented by about 100 species is mainly distributed in the temperate regions of the world¹. *Convolvulus arvensis*, commonly known as field bindweed, is native to Europe and Asia (Figure 1). It grows as a creeping or climbing herbaceous weed in agricultural fields, roadsides and wastelands. It is among the top 10 weeds of the world and is reported from about 54 countries as a weed in 32 different crops.

The family Convolvulaceae and the genus *Convolvulus* are characterized by gamopetalous, funnel-shaped corolla with epipetalous stamens (filaments attached to petals). Hence the genus is placed in subclass Gamopetalae (petals fused with each other) by Bentham and Hooker²; these two characters are the diagnostic features of subclass Gamopetalae. During revisionary work on the family Convolvulaceae, the authors col-

lected some interesting specimens of *Convolvulus arvensis* showing polypetalous condition (petals free from each other). A literature survey showed no report of polypetalae in the family Convolvulaceae and the genus *Convolvulus*. Thus free petals with free stamens in *C. arvensis* are reported here. Such type of anomalies may be due to environmental or genetic factors.



Figure 1. *Convolvulus arvensis* L.: **a**, Normal flowers with gamopetalous corolla. **b**, Flower with polypetalous corolla.

1. Mabberley, D. J., *Mabberley's Plant-book*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 2008, 3rd edn, p. 181.
2. Bentham, G. and Hooker, J. D. *Genera Plantarum*, London, 1862–1883, 3 vols.

SHIMPALE VINOD B.^{1,*}
RANI B. BHAGAT²

¹Department of Botany,
The New College,
Kolhapur 416 012, India

²Department of Botany,
Anantrao Pawar College, Pirangut,
Pune 412 113, India

*e-mail: shimpale@yahoo.com