

Acmella radicans (Asteraceae), an American weed new to Eastern India

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एकमेल्ला रेडिकैन्स (एस्टरेसिया), पूर्वी भारत में एक नयी अमेरिकी घास

देवब्रत मैती, अनिर्बन सरदार एवं सुधांशु शेखर दाश

सारांश

प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र में एकमेल्ला रेडिकैन्स (जैक.) आर. के. जैनसन प्रभेद रेडिकैन्स एक तीव्रगति से प्रसारित होने वाली घास है। जो बरुईपुर (दक्षिण 24 परगना जनपद, पश्चिम बंगाल के अपशिष्ट स्थानों से प्राप्तकर पूर्वी भारत के लिये प्रथम बार अभिलेखित की गई है। इस जाति का विस्तृत विवरण, डिजिटल छायाचित्र, पुष्पीय भागों का चित्रण दिया गया है।

ABSTRACT

Acmella radicans (Jacq.) R.K. Jansen var. *radicans* grows as a weed abundantly on waste places at Baruipur (South 24 Parganas dist., West Bengal) and reported here for first time from Eastern India. A detailed description, digital images of the plant, flower parts and illustration of the taxon is provided in the present communication.

Keywords: *Acmella radicans* var. *radicans*, Eastern India, New Record, Weed, West Bengal

INTRODUCTION

The tropical genus *Acmella* Persoon (Asteraceae) is represented by about 30 species in the world (Mabberley, 2008). In India about five species of the genus are known to occur (Chowdhery, 1995). Till date, four species, viz. *A. calva* (DC.) R.K. Jansen, *A. oleracea* (L.) R.K. Jansen, *A. paniculata* (Wall. ex DC.) R.K. Jansen and *A. uliginosa* (Sw.) Cass. are recorded from the state West Bengal (Garg, 2016).

During the floristic survey few interesting specimens of *Acmella* were collected from 24 Parganas (S) district

of West Bengal. Detailed literature studies (Chowdhery, 1995; Jagpat & al., 2009; Jagtap & Bachulkar, 2015; Rahman, 2016) and critical analysis of specimens confirmed its identity as *Acmella radicans* (Jacq.) R.K. Jansen var. *radicans*. The taxon was erstwhile recorded from different parts of India, like Kerala, Maharashtra, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Tripura (Chowdhery, 1995; Jagpat & al., 2009; Jagpat & al., 2011; Mujaffar, 2013; Bhowmik, 2013; Naik, 2014). The present finding is an extension of its distribution to Eastern India (West Bengal). In the present communication, a short description, an illustration and digital images of the species are provided.

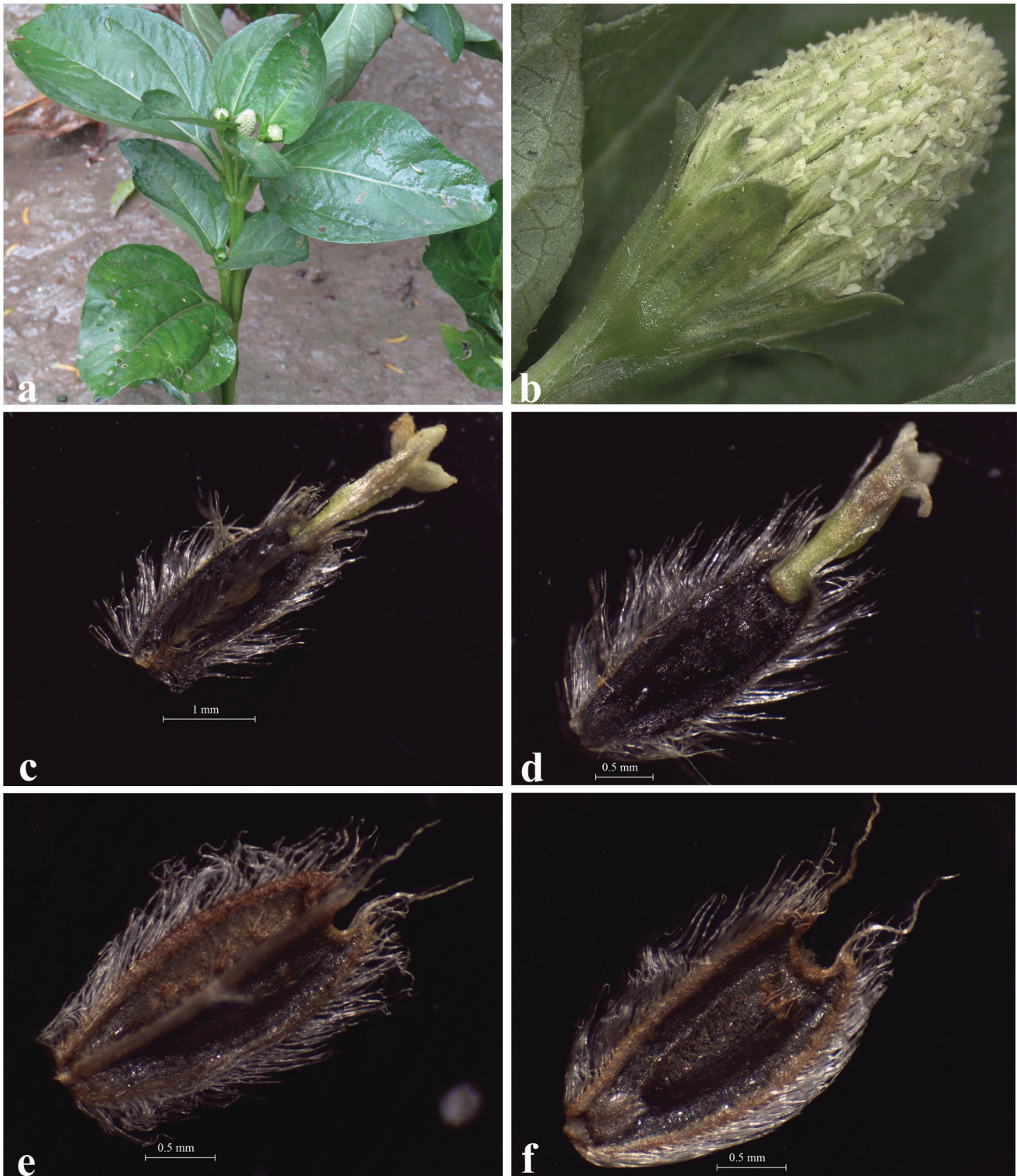


Fig. 1: *Acmella radicans* (Jacq.) R.K. Jansen var. *radicans*: A. Habit; B. Capitulum; C. Marginal floret; D. Inner floret; E. Marginal cypsel; F. Inner cypsel.

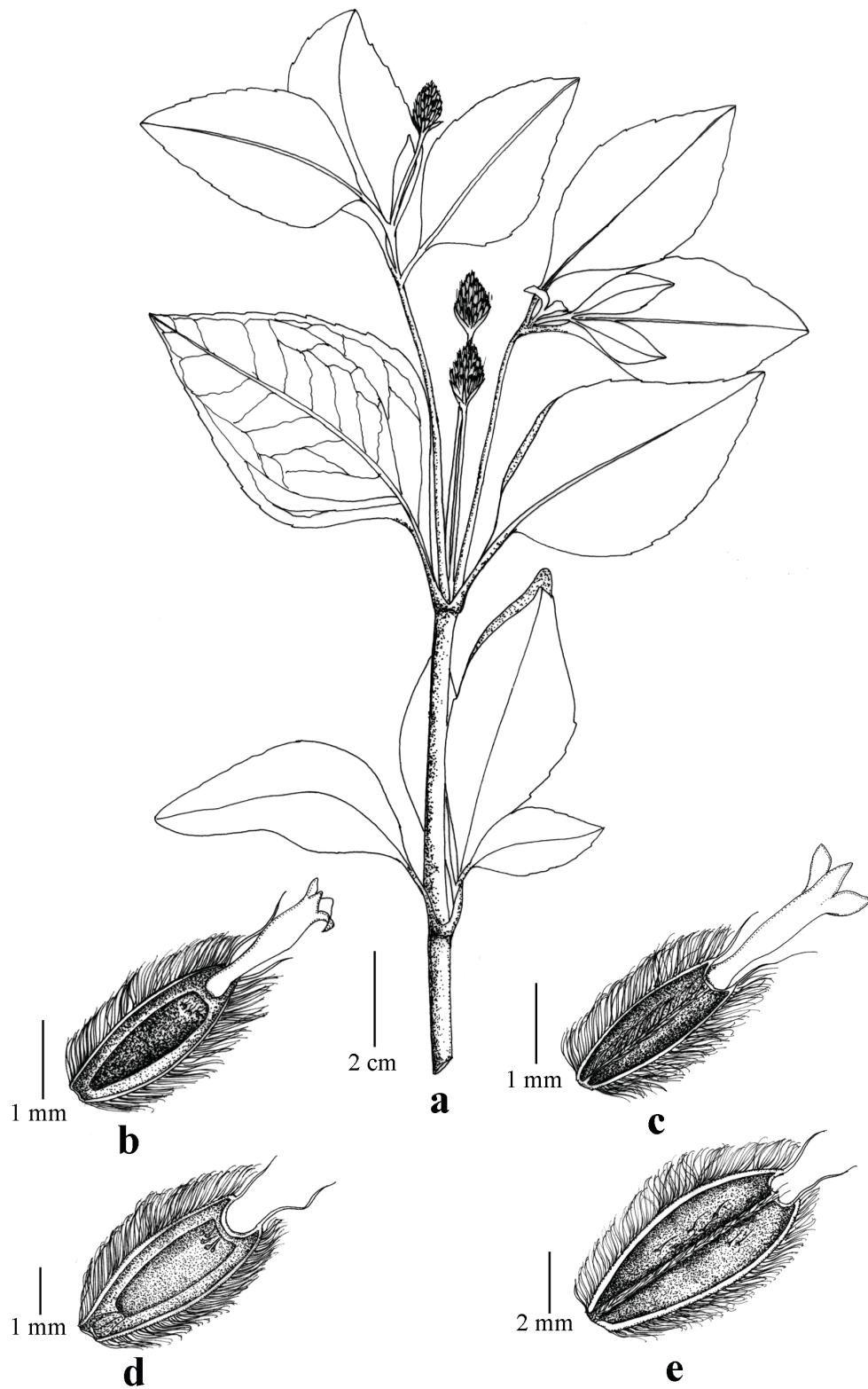


Fig. 2: *Acmella radicans* (Jacq.) R.K. Jansen var. *radicans*: A. Plant twig; B. Inner floret; C. Marginal floret; D. Inner cypsela; E. Marginal cypsela.

Acmella radicans (Jacq.) R.K. Jansen, Syst. Bot. Monogr. 8: 69-70, f. 18. 1985; Naik & al., Bio. Discov. 5(2):193.2014. *Spilanthes radicans* Jacq. Collect. Bot. Chem. Hist. Nat. 11(3): 1714.1804; Chowdhery in Hajra & al., Fl. India 12:412.1995; Jagpat & al. in Life Sc. Bull. 6(2):193.2009.

Erect herb to 50 (-90) cm tall; stems little branched towards apex, sparsely hairy; leaves ovate or ovate-rhomboid, 3-7 (-12) × 1-4 (-7) cm, acute, sparsely hairy; petioles to 2 cm long; capitula discoid, axillary or terminal, cone-like, 4-5 mm diam; phyllaries 2-seriate; corolla tubular, c. 2 mm long, 4-5 lobed, base bulbous, white; cypsela dimorphic; marginal trigonous, obcordate, margin corky, densely ciliate, surface with few tubercles; others laterally compressed, margin corky, densely ciliate, surface with few tubercles; pappus of 2 subequal bristles.

Flowering and Fruiting: April-Oct.

Distribution: India: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, West Bengal; America, Bangladesh, Mexico.

Note: The species grows as a weed in waste places, along road sides in Baruipur area of South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal and become widespread in recent years. This is a native to Central America and Mexico (Chowdhery, 1995), but now spread to other parts of the world (Rahman, 2016). Garg (2016) recorded four species of *Acmella* in West Bengal. *A. radicans* is close to *A. paniculata* (Wall. ex DC.) R.K. Jansen by its dimorphic achenes, however, longer and white florets immediately separates former from the later. The other variety *Acmella radicans* var. *debilis* (Humboldt, Bonpland & Kunth) R.K. Jansen is distributed in Maharashtra and Karnataka (Jagtap & Bachulkar, 2015).

Specimens examined. West Bengal, Baruipur, 05.04.2017, Maity & Sardar 20117, 20118 (CUH, CAL); Baruipur, Near Surya Sen Nagar, 21.05.2017, Maity & Sardar, 20122 (CUH, CAL).

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