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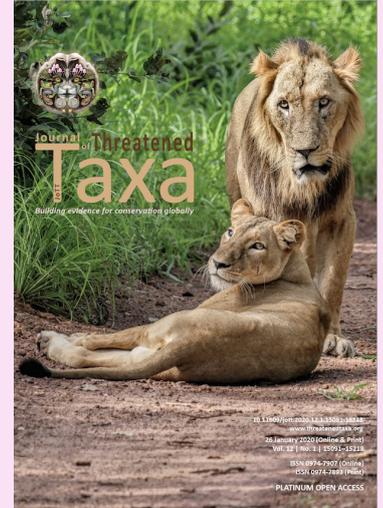
NOTE

RE-COLLECTION OF THE LUMINOUS LANTERN FLOWER *CEROPEGIA LUCIDA* WALL. (APOCYNACEAE) FROM ASSAM, INDIA

Debolina Dey, Manash Baruah, Nilakshee Devi & Jitendra Nath Borah

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Re-collection of the Luminous Lantern Flower *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. (Apocynaceae) from Assam, India

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Ceropegia lucida Wall. was first described by Wallich from Terrya Ghat, Sylhet, Bangladesh in the year 1831. Following that, the plant was also reported from the Khasia Hills, Meghalaya by Hooker & Thomson and by Wallich from Prome, Burma. It was also reported from China, Malaysia and Thailand (Siam). King collected this species from Sikkim in 1874 which was considered as the last collection of the century making it endangered or possibly extinct in India as stated by Nayar & Sashty until its rediscovery and new distribution record from the Namdapha National Park, Arunachal Pradesh in 2017. Nautiyal's record from Sikkim in 2009 is considered as a misidentification of *Ceropegia longifolia* (Khandal et al. 2017).

During a recent floristic survey to the Golaghat District, Assam during the period from August to October, 2018, the authors came across many interesting plant specimens. On consultation with the existing literature (Wallich 1831; Hooker 1883; Kanjilal et al. 1939; Ansari 1984; Kambale 2015) and herbarium specimens deposited at KEW and CAL, this specimen was confirmed as *Ceropegia lucida* Wall.

Ceropegia lucida Wall.

Pl. Asiat. Rar. 2:33, t.139. 1831; Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 4: 73. 1883; P.C. Kanjilal et al., Fl. Assam 3: 309. 1939; H. Huber, Mem. Soc. Brot; 12, 1-203. 1957; Ansari, Fasc. Fl. India 16: 22. 1984; M.P. Nayar & Sastry (eds.), Red Data Book Indian Pl. 2: 44. 1988; A.P. Jagtap & N.P. Singh, Fasc. Fl. India 24: 229. 1999.

According to the protologues and the existing literature, *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. is a perennial twiner with glabrous stems (Image 1). The leaves are bright green, glabrous, simple, opposite and decussate with elliptic to oblong leaf lamina, 5–11cm x 2.3–4.9 cm, petiole 1.4–1.6 cm. The apex is acute to acuminate and base is narrower. Inflorescence axillary with 2–6 flowered umbellate cymes, peduncle 1.5cm (Image 2). Flowers are 1.2–3.2 cm long, greenish or yellowish-white with purple spots, pedicel 1–1.5 cm. Calyx five partite, linear to subulate. Corolla tube cylindrical with a funnel shaped throat and rings of hairs in the wider part. Corolla lobes are greenish-white with purple spots on it, connate at the apex margined by long translucent hairs (Image 3). Corona is biseriate with five bifid deltoid

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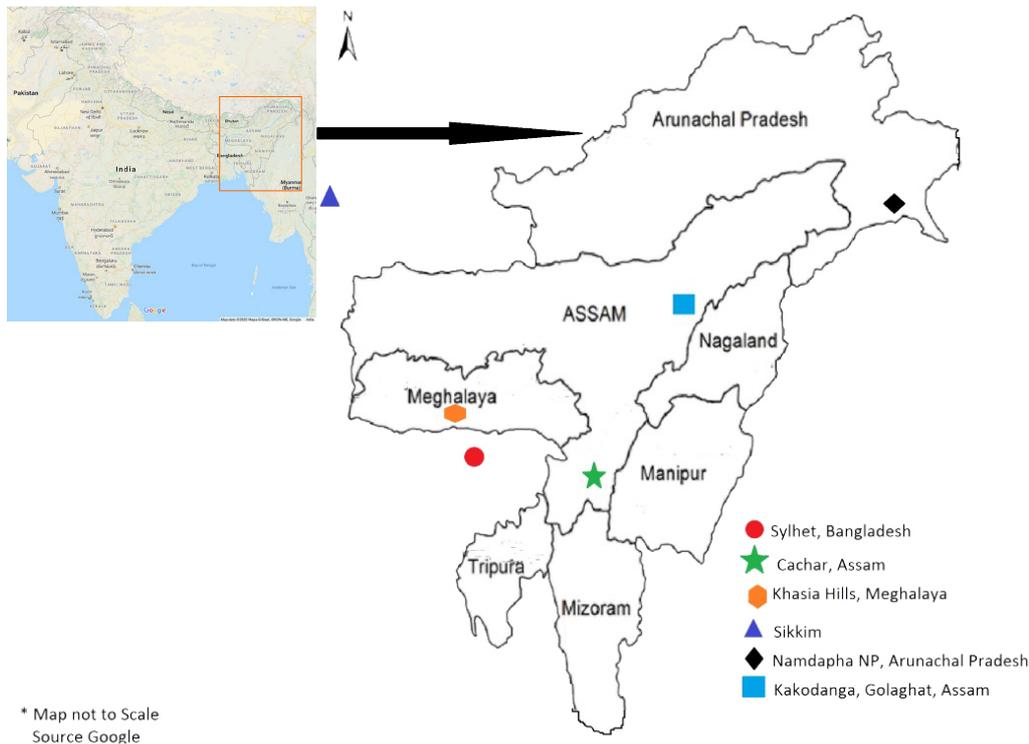


Figure 1. Known locations of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. in northeastern India.



Image 1. Habit of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall.



Image 2. Inflorescence with leaves of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall.

lobes on the outside and five erect linear to clavate lobes on the inside.

Flowering: September to November; fruits not seen.

Specimen examined: Bangladesh, Sylhet, N. Wallich (K001129042, image!); INDIA. Cachar, Assam, June 1874, R. L. Keenan s.n. (K001325174, image!); Sikkim 1874, G. King s.n. (CAL0000031920, image!); Kakodanga, Golaghat, Assam, 25.xi.2018, D. Dey & M. Baruah, DDM01 (GUBH).

Distribution: India (Arunachal Pradesh (Namdapha National Park), Assam (Cachar, Golaghat), Meghalaya (Khasia Hills), Sikkim), Bangladesh (Sylhet), Myanmar (Promé), Thailand, Malaysia, China.

Population and habitat: The authors came across the plant twining on an abandoned streamside land mass from the Golaghat District of Assam. The twiner grew in close association with bamboos, ferns and other climbers like pipers, *Paederia foetida* etc. Since only 5–6

Table 1. A comparative analysis of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. with other closely related species of northeastern India.

Attributes	<i>Ceropegia macrantha</i> Wight (Kambale & Yadav 2019).	<i>Ceropegia longifolia</i> Wall. (Kambale & Yadav 2019).	<i>Ceropegia lucida</i> Wall. (Kambale & Yadav 2019; present study).
Leaves	Ovate to lanceolate, 4.5–14 x 2–7 cm.	Lanceolate to linear, 5.7–20.3 x 0.4–3.8 cm.	Elliptic to oblong, 5–11 x 2.3–4.9 cm.
Petiole	1.2–2.4 cm long.	0.5–0.8 cm long.	1.4–1.6 cm long.
Inflorescence	4–5 flowered, subumbellate cymes, peduncle 1.2–2.7 cm long, hairy in rows.	5–12 flowered, umbellate cymes, peduncle 1.8–4 cm long.	2–6 flowered, umbellate cymes, peduncle c. 2cm long, fleshy.
Pedicel	c. 0.8cm long, glabrous.	0.5–1.2 cm long, puberulous.	1–1.5 cm long, glabrous
Corolla	2.5–7.6 cm long with pink spots throughout, tube cylindrical, 1.8–3.2 cm long.	1.6–3.8 cm with dark purple spots restricted to the funnel shaped throat only, tube curved, 0.5–2.5 cm long.	1.8–2.7 cm long with purple spots throughout, tube cylindrical, 1.2–2.5 cm long.
Lobes	2.4–2.8 cm long, yellow at lower and dull green at upper half, linear to lanceolate.	0.5–1 cm long, yellowish-green with dark purple spots, elliptic to ovate.	0.7–2.5 cm long, greenish white with purple spots, broadly or elliptic oblong.
Corona	Outer of 5 deeply bifid, pink coloured densely haired lobes, inner of 5 linear lobes.	Outer of 5 deeply bifid deltoid lobes, ciliate along and within margins, inner of 5 linear sub-spathulate lobes.	Outer of 5 shortly bifid- deltoid lobes, ciliate along margins, inner of linear-clavate lobes.



Image 3. A single flower of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall.

number of individuals were observed growing in a single population, only a single plant with a single matured flower was collected for preservation and herbarium making. The voucher specimen has been deposited at the GUBH, Gauhati University, Guwahati (DDM01).

Discussion: According to the Flora of British India, Vol. IV. 73pp. and herbarium specimen (K001325174, image!); R.L. Keenan had collected this plant from the Cachar District of Assam in June, 1874 after which it was neither collected nor reported from anywhere within the state. Barbhuiya in 2013 categorized it as

“Regionally Extinct” after being unable to locate it in its site of occurrence. In a significant finding, the authors came across this plant in Golaghat District of Assam after a gap of 145 years. A few photographs of the plant as well as the herbarium specimen DDM01 (Image 4) along with a map (Figure 1) are provided to aid in its proper identification. Also, a comparative analysis of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. with other closely related species of northeastern India (viz., *C. macrantha* Wight and *C. longifolia* Wall.) is given in Table 1.



Image 4. Herbarium of *Ceropegia lucida* Wall. Photographed by Manash Baruah.

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