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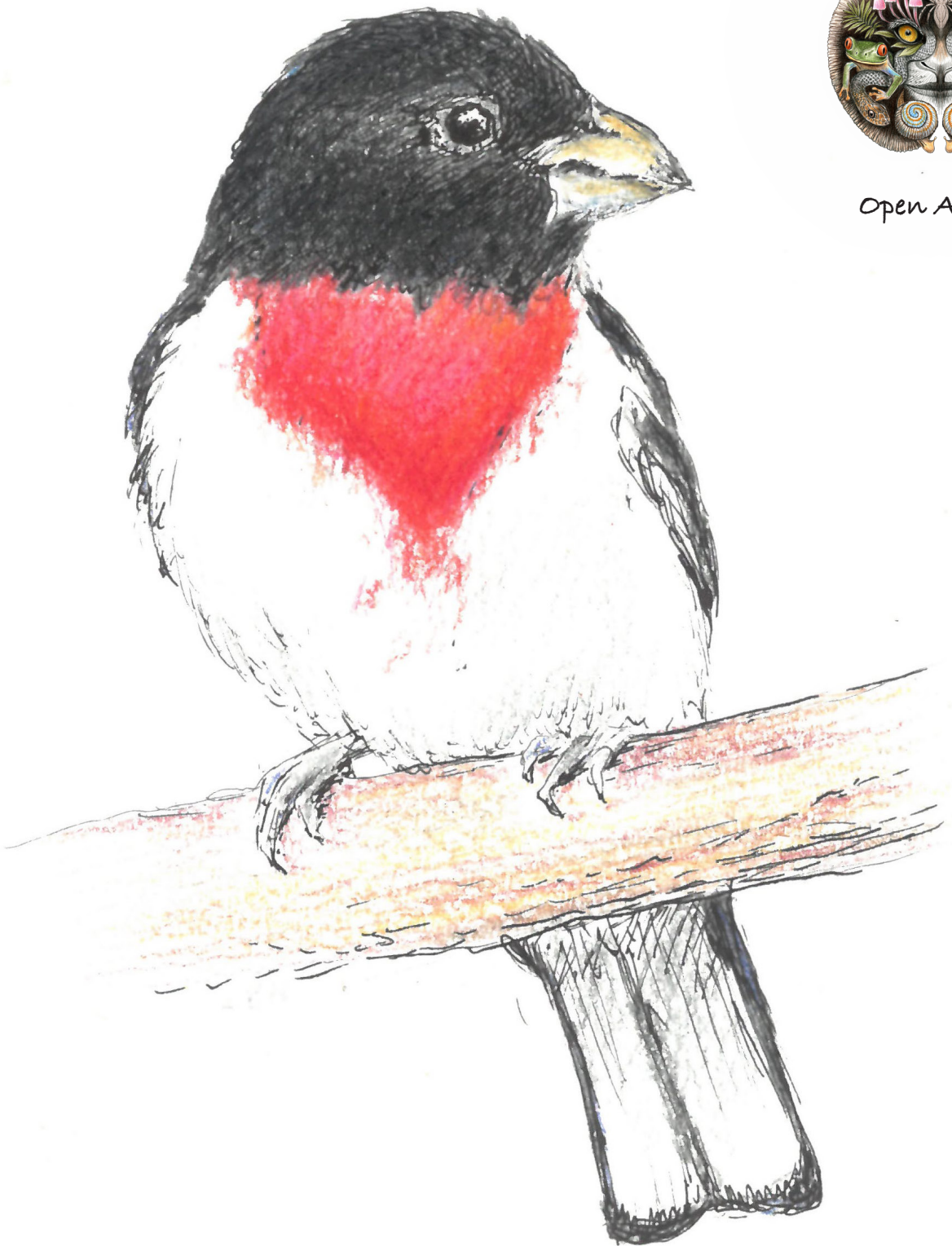
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43/2 Varadarajulu Nagar, 5th Street West, Ganapathy, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 641006, India
Registered Office: 3A2 Varadarajulu Nagar, FCI Road, Ganapathy, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 641006, India
Ph: +91 9385339863 | www.threatenedtaxa.org
Email: sanjay@threatenedtaxa.org

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Cover: Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, pen & ink with colour pencil. © Lucille Betti-Nash.



Strobilanthes khasyana (Acanthaceae): an addition to the flora of Nagaland, India

Pfuchüpe-ü Mero¹ , Kazhuhrii Eshuo²  & Neizo Puro³ 

^{1,3} Department of Botany, Nagaland University, Hqs: Lumami, Zunheboto, Nagaland 798627, India.

¹ Department of Botany, Phek Government College, Phek District, Nagaland 797108, India.

² Department of Botany, D.M. College of Science, Dhanamanjuri University, Manipur 795001, India.

¹ pfuchupeu7@gmail.com, ² kazhuhrii@gmail.com (corresponding author), ³ neizopuro@gmail.com

The genus *Strobilanthes* Blume belonging to Acanthaceae is represented by 454 species (POWO 2024) in the world mostly distributed in Asia tropical and sub-tropical hilly regions (Wood et al. 2021). In India, the taxon is represented by 150 species (Wood et al. 2021), 167 species (BSI 2024), and about 85 species reported from northeastern India mostly reported from the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura (Wood et al. 2021). In Nagaland state, about 20 species of *Strobilanthes* have been reported (Mao et al. 2017) and about 33 species were updated in the website (BSI 2024). Moaakum & Chaturvedi (2015) reported eight species of *Strobilanthes* from Zunheboto district, Kapfo (2018) had reported nine species of *Strobilanthes* from Pulie Badze Wildlife Sanctuary and Jotsoma Community Forest, Kohima. Mozhui (2014) and Sachu (2018) had reported one species each of *Strobilanthes* from Dimapur district and Japfu Mountain. Lea (2023) reported seven species of *Strobilanthes* from Phek district.

During the field exploration to Phek District of Nagaland, an interesting species of *Strobilanthes* was collected at Khulazu Basa Forest of Zanübu mountain range. On further critical examination of the species and

consultation with the available literature (Kanjilal et al. 1939; Clarke 1884, 1885; Wood 2001; Venu 2006; Mao et al. 2017), the species was identified as *Strobilanthes khasyana*, which is hitherto unknown to angiospermic flora of Nagaland, Northeast India. The taxon has been reported to be an endemic to the states of Meghalaya, Sikkim, and West Bengal (BSI 2024). The occurrence of *S. khasyana* is an extension of its new distributional range to Nagaland state.

Plants were collected, dried, and pressed and herbarium sheet were prepared following the standard given by Jain & Rao (1976). Field photographs were taken using Canon EOS200D. Measurements of plant parts were based on the living plant specimens. Herbarium have been deposited in the Angiospermic Herbarium, Department of Botany, Nagaland University for future reference [NU-PM-260].

Taxonomic treatment

Strobilanthes khasyana (Nees) T. Anderson, J. Linn. Soc., Bot. 9: 471. 1867. *Endopogon khasyanus* Nees in A.P.de Candolle, Prodr. 11: 104. 1847; *Listrobanthes khasyana* (Nees) Bremek. in Verh. Kon. Ned. Akad. Wetensch., Afd. Natuurk., Sect. 2, 41(1): 254.

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Image 1. *Strobilanthes khasyana* (Nees) T. Anderson. a—Plant habit | b—An inflorescence showing a flower and bracts | c—Flower showing corolla tube and exerted stamens | d—Flowers in front view. © Pfüchüpe-ü Mero

1944. (Image 1 & 2)

Plant shrubs, 1–2 foot tall, stem quadrangular, green, with distinct nodes, glabrous to pubescent, hairy; petiolate, petiole 0.7–1 cm long; stipules on leaf axil.

Leaves opposite, unequal in size, leaf lamina/blade, broadly elliptic to ovate long, 7–9 x 2.5–4 cm, apex acuminate, base cuneate, and tapering into petiole, margin serrate, pubescent, lateral veins 3–7 pairs.



Image 2. *Strobilanthes khasiyana* (Nees) T. Anderson herbarium specimen submitted to the Angiospermic Herbarium, Department of Botany, Nagaland University. Photo credit: Pfüchüpe-ü Mero

Inflorescence lateral spike, arising from the branch node of unequal clusters of spikes, spike 2–9.5 cm long, rachis pubescent; bracts are 5–8 mm long, bracteole 6 mm. corolla purple to white, 5–7 mm long, basal corolla tube white, 1–1.3 cm long; funnel shaped, sepals 5–6 mm long, stamens 2, strongly exerted.

Ecology: The plants were found growing in moist shaded area along with other herbs like *Pilea* sp., *Strobilanthes* sp., *Elatostema* sp., and *Macropanax* sp.

Distribution: India (Meghalaya, Sikkim, West Bengal, Nagaland – present report)

Specimen examined: India: Nagaland: Phek District, Zanübu mountain range, Khulazu Basa Forest, 25.392°N & 94.170°E; 1,600–1,800 m, NU-PM-260 (Image 2).

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Dr. Rupika S. Rajakaruna, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
Dr. Bahar Baviskar, Wild-CER, Nagpur, Maharashtra 440013, India

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The Managing Editor, JoTT,
c/o Wildlife Information Liaison Development Society,
43/2 Varadarajulu Nagar, 5th Street West, Ganapathy, Coimbatore,
Tamil Nadu 641006, India
ravi@threatenedtaxa.org



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