A new species of Sarcoglyphis (Orchidaceae) from Arunachal Pradesh, India

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A new species of Sarcoglyphis, S. arunachalensis, from Arunachal Pradesh, India is described.

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Introduction

During a critical study on the Orchid Flora of Arunachal Pradesh, one of the collections made from West Kameng district of the state has been found to be a new species of the genus Sarcoglyphis Garay. Earlier, the same collection was wrongly identified and reported as Stereochilus bicuspidatus by A. N. Rao (1986).

The genus Sarcoglyphis which was established by Garay in 1972 is characterised by the high raising fleshy laterally compressed rostellum of the column and long slender U-bent stipe with 4 pollinia. So far, a total of 10 species is known in this genus distributed in Burma, Yunnan, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaya, Java and Borneo (Wood 1987; Seidenfaden 1988). The present new species makes the total number 11 and also extends the distribution of the genus further North West into the North East Himalayas of India.

The present species is distinct from the so far known ones especially in having incurved lateral lobes of the lip and the spur without a longitudinal septum inside. It may be noted that the latter character, i.e. absence of a longitudinal septum inside the spur of the lip, though does not contradict Garay's original generic diagnosis which does not discuss this feature, but invalidates the keys supplied by Seidenfaden (1988) and Senghas (in Brieger et al. 1970–1986). However, the observation on the pollinarium structure in the present living specimens justifies the place of the genus used by the above authors in the group “two pollen masses, each completely divided in more or less unequal, semiglobular, free halves”.

Sarcoglyphis arunachalensis Nageswara Rao, sp. nov.

S. thailandica Seidenf. affinis, sed differt inflorescentiis elongatis ramosis; labello lobo lateralibus incurvatis lobo medio sagittato apiculato; calcari aseptati.

Typus: India, Arunachal Pradesh state, West Kameng district, Sessa, 1100 m, S. N. Hegde 4199 (holotypus); Tipi, 200 m. A. N. Rao 5511 (paratypus). Deposited in Orchid Herbarium, Tipi.

Small epiphyte growing on the branches of small trees in dense evergreen tropical and subtropical rain forests at altitudes of 200 and 1100 m. Stem 2–3 cm, with many long slender roots at base. Leaves 2–16 × 0.5–2.0 cm, strapshaped, strongly veined, unequally obtusely or acutely bilobed at tip with a minute mucro. Inflorescence usually a panicle, upto 16 cm long, drooping, many flowered. Scape and rhachis dark brown with persistent small, triangular floral bracts. Flower about 1 cm across, white tinged with rose purple on sepals and lip, scented. Dorsal sepal obovate, 6 × 4 mm, subacute, cucullate, recurved at apex. Lateral sepals obliquely ovate, 7 × 5 mm, subacute, deflexed parallelly to the ovary. Petals oblongolate, 6 × 3 mm, obtuse. Lip firmly attached to the column, fleshy, 3-lobed; lateral lobes broadly triangular, 3 × 2 mm, tips incurved and
touching each other; midlobe triangular, sagittate, 2 × 2 mm, with a short sharp apicule at apex. Spur tubular, 4 × 1.5 mm, white, forwardly bent in lower 3/4 portion. Backwall callus 0.5 mm, oblong, with a median vertical groove, finely papillose allover. Frontwall callus arcuate. Column 3 × 1.5 mm. Anther cap 1 mm with long curved beak, white. Pollinia 4, yellow, in two groups, attached together by a bifurcate caudicle; stipe 3–4 mm long, curved, hyaline, with a small gland at apex. Flowering: May – Fig. 1.

This species is closely allied to S. thailandica seidenf. but can easily be distinguished form it by the elongate branched racemes, the incurved lateral lobes of the lip, the apicule at the apex of the midlobe and a spur without any septum inside.

Acknowledgements – Sincere thanks are due to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, The Chief Wild Life Warden and to the Orchidologist Forest Department of Arunachal Pradesh for facilities and encouragement.

References


