

Hedyotis kurzii (Rubiaceae): A new record for Peninsular India

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Abstract

Hedyotis kurzii Merr. is reported from Kerala and Karnataka in Peninsular India. A detailed description, illustration and photograph are provided for easy identification.

Keywords: *Hedyotis kurzii*, India, new record, Peninsular India, Rubiaceae

Introduction

The genus *Hedyotis* L. (Rubiaceae) comprises 515 species distributed in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world (Terrell & Robinson, 2003). In India, it is represented by 74 species (Dutta & Deb, 2004; Henry & Subramanyam, 1972; Karuppusamy & Ravichandran, 2014; Viswanathan & Manikandan, 2008).

During the course of floristic studies on the herbaceous flora of the low altitude coastal grasslands, the authors collected an interesting specimen of *Hedyotis* from Maniyampara in Kasargod district of Kerala and subsequently in Pavanje-Mulki in Dakshina Kannada District of Karnataka. Critical studies in consultation with the photograph of the type specimen and other relevant literature revealed it to be *H. kurzii*, a species hitherto not reported from Peninsular India.

A detailed description and illustration of the species is provided here to facilitate easy identification.

Hedyotis kurzii Merr., Mich. Acad. Sc. 19:195.1933. *H. wallichii* Kurz J. Asiat. Soc. Beng. 45(2): 136.1876; Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 3:53.1880; Craib, Enum. Fl. Siam. 2:52.1932. R. Dutta & Deb, Tax. Rev. *Hedyotis* Ind. Subcont. 41. 2004. *Oldenlandia wallichi* (Kurz) Craib in Kew Bull. 388.1911. *Oldenlandia rosea* Ridley in J. Roy. Asiat. Soc. Str. Br. 59:110.1911 & Fl. Malay Penin. 2:54.1923. *H. nicobarensis* (Kurz) Lewis in Ann. Miss. Bot. Gard. 53:109. 1961, *nom. superfl.* *H. galiliodes* Wall. Cat. 866.1829.

Figs. 1,2

Annual, erect herbs, 6–60 cm tall; stem quadrangular, glabrous, root stock woody. Leaves 0.5–0.8 × 0.5–2

cm, in remote pairs, undulate, acute at apex, cuneate or sometimes oblique at base, glabrous; petiole up to 1.2 cm long, glabrous. Stipules connate, up to 2 mm long, 4–6-dentate. Inflorescence terminal and axillary, slender, trichotomous, lax, paniculate cymes;



Fig. 1. *Hedyotis kurzii* Merr.: Root stock and Stem showing stipule and fruit.

peduncles up to 15 cm long, very slender, terete, glabrous. Flower 1×1mm; pedicel up to 1 cm long, slender, terete, smooth. Calyx limb very short, dialated at maturity, lobes 4, 0.1–0.4 × 0.1–0.2 mm, triangular, acute. Corolla white or pale blue; tube c. 0.6 mm long; lobes 4, 0.4–0.5 × 0.2–0.4 mm, oblong, acute, pubescent at base. Stamens 4, inserted just below sinus of corolla lobes; filaments c. 0.5 mm long; anthers c. 0.1 mm long, oblong. Ovary 1.5–2 × 1–1.2 mm, ovules many; style stout, up to 1.2 mm long; stigma bilobed. Capsules 1.5–2 × 2–3 mm, globose, lobes equal or unequal, top flat or shortly hemispheric, obtuse, angular, dehiscing loculicidally, then septicidally. Seeds 0.2 × 0.18 mm, many, angular, reticulate, black.

Flowering & Fruiting: July – September

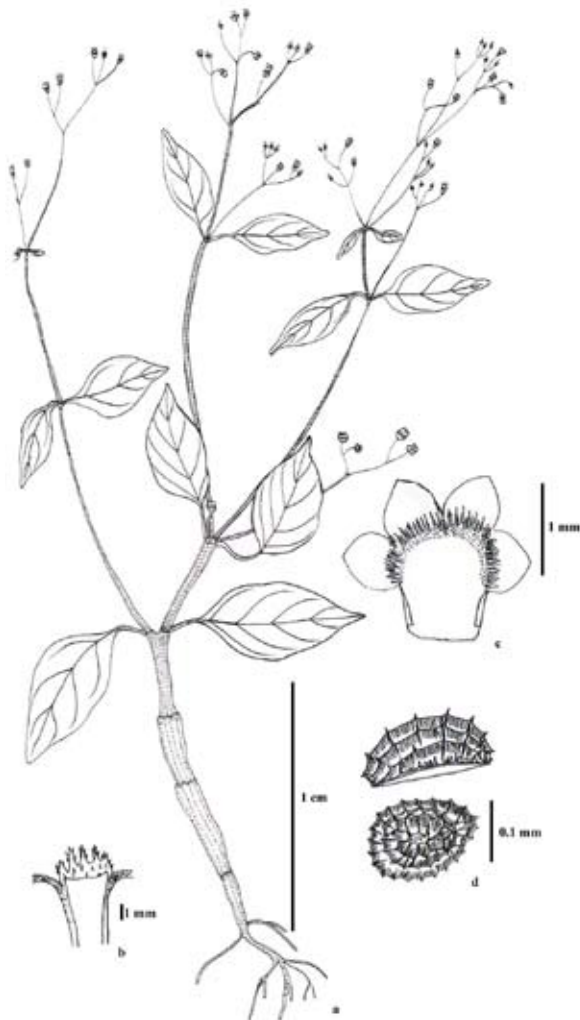


Fig. 2. *Hedyotis kurzii* Merr.: **a.** Habit; **b.** Stipule; **c.** Flower – corolla opened; **d.** Seeds (Dorsal & Ventral views).

Habitat: Grows on moist rocks during monsoon in mixed deciduous forest. Usually found in association with species such as *Bigonia crenata* Dryand., *Ariopsis peltata* Nimmo. and *Adiantum lunulatum* Burm.f.

Distribution: The species is said to be common among the grass heaths of Camorta Island of the Nicobar Islands in the Indian Ocean and West Bengal (Calcutta). It is also reported from deciduous jungles of Burma, Myanmar and Malaysia (Thailand). The present collection from Kasargod district of Kerala and Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka shows an extended distribution in Peninsular India.

Specimens examined: INDIA, Kerala, Kasaragod District, Maniyampara, 12°38'54"N, 75°2'55"E, 90 m, 10.8.2012, Rashmi & Krishnakumar 642 (MH, Mangalore University Herbarium).

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