

Rediscovery of *Blyxa japonica* (Miquel) Maximowicz ex Ascherson et Gürke - a hydrophyte from Lakhimpur district of Assam, India

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Abstract

Blyxa japonica (Miquel) Maximowicz ex Ascherson et Gürke of the family Hydrocharitaceae is reported here from Podumoni Beel in the Lakhimpur district of Assam after a gap of 114 years. The species has been described with photographs in the present communication.

Key word: *Blyxa japonica*, rediscovery, hydrophyte, Assam

INTRODUCTION

Blyxa Noronha ex du Petit Thouars is represented by 9 species and it is distributed in tropical and subtropical regions of West and Central Africa, Malagasy to South and East Asia, Malaysia, North Australia and introduced in North America (Guha & Mondal 2005). Hooker (1885) described 7 species of *Blyxa* from British-India. In India the genus is represented by 3 species with one variety viz., *Blyxa aubertii* L.C. Richard, *B. octandra* (Roxburgh) Planchon, *B. japonica* (Miquel) Maximowicz ex Ascherson et Gürke and *B. aubertii* L.C. Richard var. *echinosperma* (C.B. Clarke) Cook et R. Lüönd (Guha & Mondal 2005). Naik (1964) reported 2 species from Assam viz., *B. aubertii* L.C. Richard and *B. echinosperma* (Cl.) Hook.f. Chowdhury (2005) enlisted *B. aubertii* Rich. and *B. echinosperma* (C.B. Clarke) Hooker f. from Assam. Another species viz., *B. japonica* (Miquel) Maximowicz is also reported from Assam and Meghalaya (Guha & Mondal 2005). During recent field works to explore the wetland flora of Lakhimpur district of Assam the authors collected a specimen from Padumoni Beel which was subsequently identified as *Blyxa japonica* (Miquel) Maximowicz ex Ascherson et Gürke of the family Hydrocharitaceae. There were two collections of the species from Tengali Bam Garden of Tinsukia district of Assam deposited in CAL (Tengali Bam Garden, 05.10.1898, Jakoba.Hook 53 and Jenkins, s.n.). In both of these herbarium sheets localities and other information are not clearly mentioned. From Meghalaya the species was collected from Nongpoh (37474, 30.07. 1964, J. Joseph, ASSAM). After scrutiny of literature and herbarium materials it is found that the species has been collected from Assam after a gap of 114 years since 1898. The voucher specimens have been deposited in the herbarium of Botany Department of Gauhati University (GUBH). Description along with other relevant information and photograph of the species has been provided here.

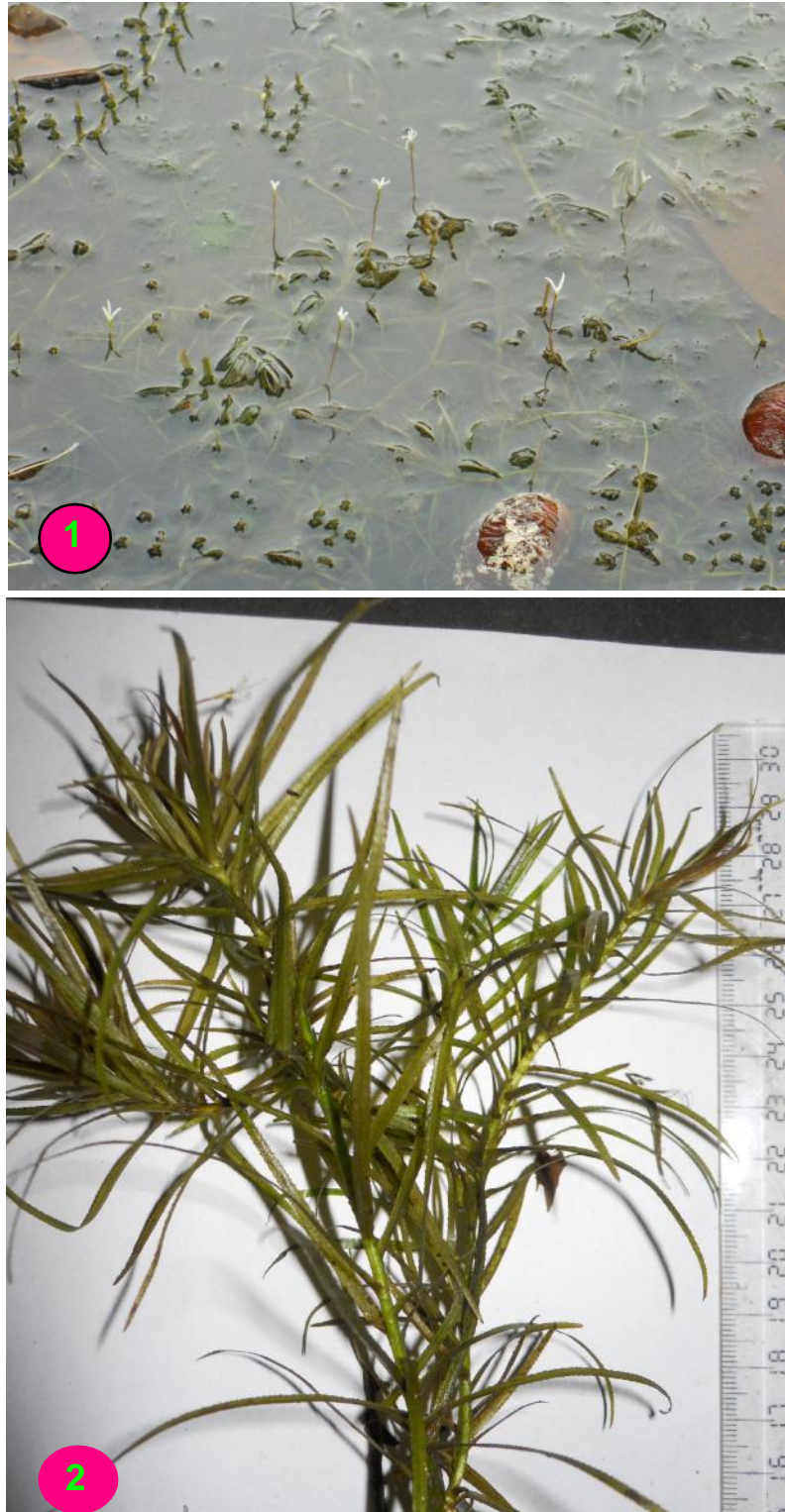


PLATE I. *Blyxa japonica*: **Fig. 1.** In the habitat with flowers; **Fig. 2.** A close-up view taking out of water

Blyxa japonica (Miquel) Maximowicz *ex* Ascherson *et* Gürke, in Engler *et* Prantl, Pflanzenfam., 2. 1: 253. 1889; Hartog in Steenis, Fl. Males., 1. 5: 393. 1957; Karthikeyan *et al.*, Fl. Ind. Enum. Monocot. 80. 1989. *Hydrilla japonica* Miquel, Ann. Mus. Bot. 2: 271. 1866. [Plate I]

Aquatic, herbs, monoecious. Roots fibrous. Stems up to 15 cm long, branched, tender. Leaves sessile with sheathing leaf base, light green, linear, serrated, acute, midrib distinct, veins parallel. Flowers solitary, emergent, bisexual. Sepals linear, 1.5 – 4 x 0.5 – 1 mm, green. Petals lanceolate, 4 – 6 x 0.5 – 1 mm. Stamens 3, filaments 0.4 mm; anthers 0.6 – 0.7 mm, linear. Ovary 1.3 cm; style 1.9 cm; stigma linear, 0.7 mm long.

Flowers & Fruits: August – December

Habitat: Marshy places.

Distribution: India (E. India, Assam, Meghalaya), Nepal, Bangladesh, Thailand, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Korea, New Guinea, Italy, Celebes.

Exsiccate: Podumoni Beel, North Lakhimpur, 07.10.2011 and 29.08.2012, KP 285 (GUBH), 286 (GUBH), 345 (GUBH).

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