

***Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea* (Lindley) Lindley [Orchidaceae] –a new record to Manipur, India**

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Abstract

Coelogyne fuscescens var. *brunnea* (Lindley) Lindley is reported for the first time as new distributional record for Manipur from the Tamenglong district.

Key words: *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea*, new record, Manipur

INTRODUCTION

Recent surveys for orchids in Manipur has led to the discovery of many plants which were not known to grow in Manipur previously (Sathish & Suresh 2005; Chowlu *et al* 2012; Kishor *et al* 2012). During a field survey in Tamenglong district of Manipur in April 2011, the senior author could collect and identify one orchid as *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea* (Lindley) Lindley. A Review of literature reveals that, John Lindley has established a new species namely, *Coelogyne brunnea* in 1848 based on a plant flowered in Syon under cultivation without mentioning any exact place of origin or place of collection of the plant. Later in 1854 he has treated the above species as a variety of *Coelogyne fuscescens* including one of the J.D. Hooker's collections from Sikkim. However, Rolfe (1913) and Sidenfaden (1975) identified the above mentioned collection of Sikkim as *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *fuscescens* Lindley. Das & Jain (1980) in their work on the revisionary study of genus *Coelogyne* in India, mentioned its distribution in India (West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram), Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar. Pearce & Cribb (2002) during their study on orchids of Bhutan could not locate this variety from Bhutan and expressed its occurrence in Bhutan as doubtful. Similarly the report of its occurrence in Arunachal Pradesh by Chowdhery (1998) without any mention of exact locality or evidence of herbarium specimen is also doubtful. The present finding of *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea* from Tamenglong district of Manipur forms a new record to the state.

A detailed description of the present taxon is given below along with a plate of colour photos to facilitate the field botanists to locate it in other places.

Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea (Lindley) Lindley, Fol. Orchid. *Coelogyne* 5: 11, n. 26 b. 1854. *Coelogyne brunnea* Lindley in Gard. Chron. 1848: 71. 1848.

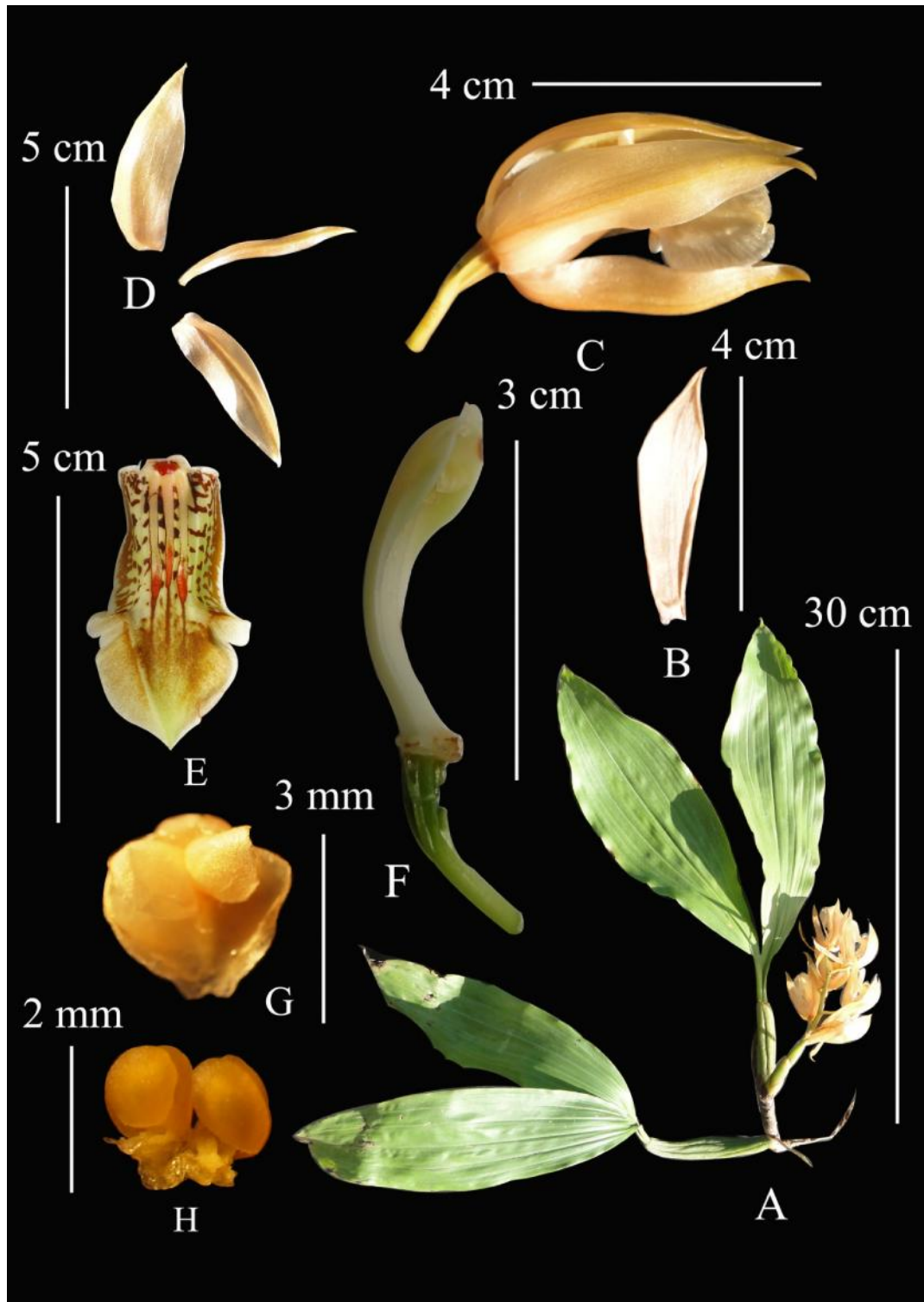


Fig. 1. *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea* (Lindley) Lindley: A. Plant habit; B. Bract; C. Flower; D. Floral parts; E. Lip; F. Column with pedicellate ovary; G. Anther cap; H. Pollinia. All from COGCEHR/Herb/Chowlu- 00113. [Photographs by K. Chowlu].

An epiphyte, 40 – 50 cm tall. Pseudobulbs 6.0 – 9.5 x 1.0 – 1.4 cm, conical to ovoid-cylindric, clustered, sheathed at base. Leaves 2, 15 – 28 x 5 – 8 cm, oblong-elliptic, undulate, acute, 3-veined; petioles 3.0 – 3.5 cm long. Inflorescence proteranthous, 5 – 8 flowered, erect or sub-erect, flowers opening together; peduncle sheathed at base; rachis slightly zigzag, 12 – 17 cm long; floral bracts caduceous, 4.2 – 4.5 x 1 cm, oblong, acute. Flowers 4.0 – 5.5 cm across, brown. Sepals sub equal, oblong-lanceolate, acute; dorsal sepal 4.0 – 4.5 x 2.0 – 2.1 cm, slightly concave; lateral sepals 3.8 – 4.0 x 1.1 – 1.5 cm, keeled. Petals 4.0 – 4.3 x 0.3 cm, linear-lanceolate, acute-acuminate, reflexed. Lip 3.2 – 3.8 x 1.7 – 1.9 cm, membranous, disc 3 keeled running from the base to the middle, 3-lobed, lateral lobes short, rounded, reflexed; mid lobe elliptic-oblong, slightly undulate, acute; lips with dark brown stripe. Columns 3.3 – 3.5 long, curved, winged at apex, rounded apex, creamy brown. Anther cap 3.0 – 3.2 x 2.1 – 2.5, light brown, 2 chambered. Pollinia 4, 1.5 – 1.8 x 1 mm, smooth.

Flowering: December

Exsiccatae: Tamenglong District, Manipur, *K. Chowlu-00113*, COGCEHR Herbarium, Hengbung.

Location: 1287 m, 24° 36.26' N & 93° 30.00' E

Distribution: INDIA [West Bengal, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur], Nepal and Myanmar

Note: *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *brunnea* differs from *C. fuscescens* var. *fuscescens* in brown flowers with dark brown stripes on lip; sepals and petals slightly longer; lip elliptic-oblong, acute, lateral lobes short, rounded; column rounded at apex whereas in *Coelogyne fuscescens* var. *fuscescens* flowers are pale yellow and lip with yellow-green central stripe; sepals and petals shorter; lip narrowly oblong, blunt at apex, lateral lobes oblong, rounded; column mucronate at apex.

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