

## ***Hygrophila erecta* (N.L. Burman) Hochreutiner [Acanthaceae] – a new record of occurrence for West Bengal, India**

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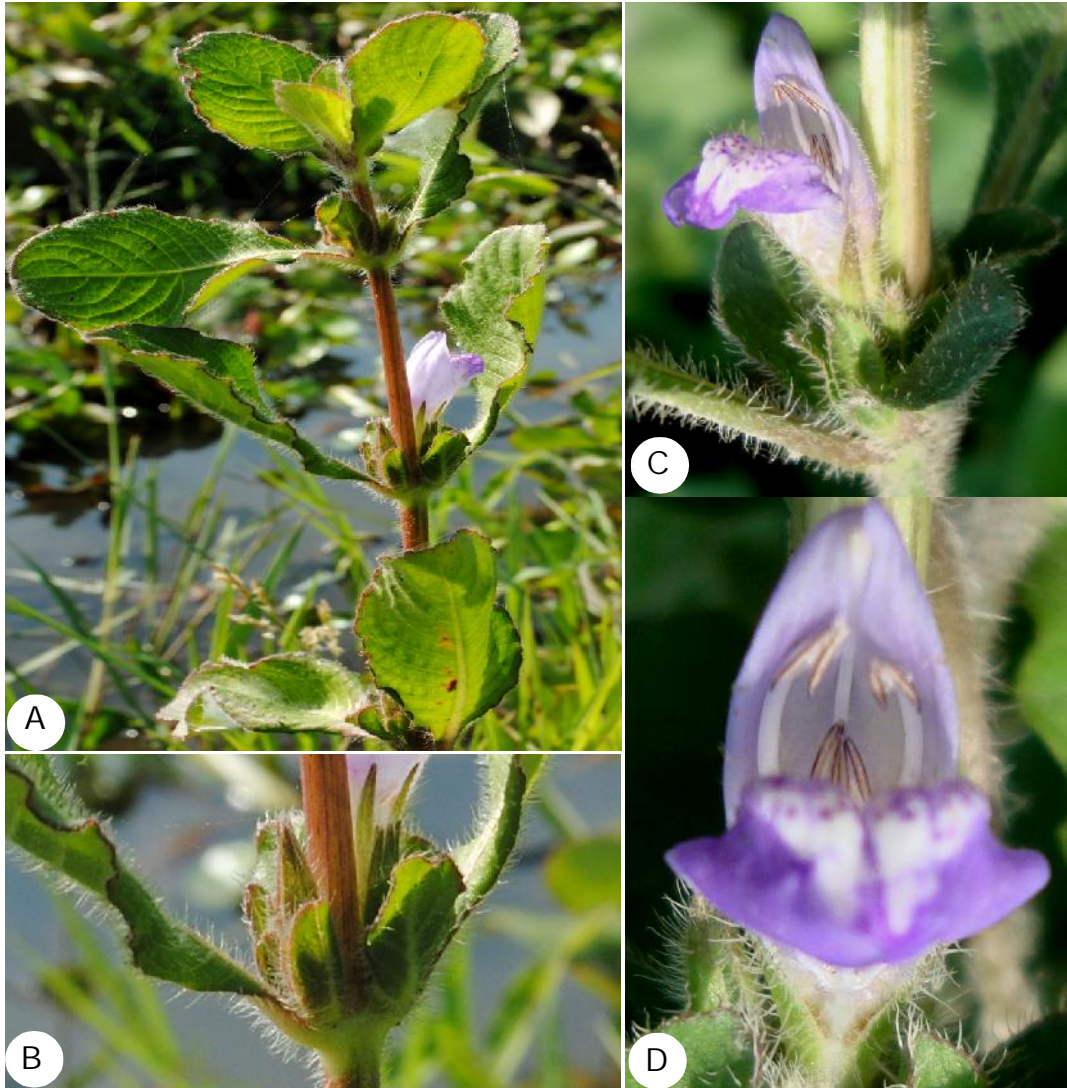
### **Abstract**

*Hygrophila erecta* (N.L. Burman) Hochreutiner [Acanthaceae], an erect wetland plant have been collected first time for the main land of India from the margins of the roadside ephemeral water bodies at Dash-Dargaon and Pani-kouri of Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. The taxonomic description, photograph, distribution are provided for easy identification and enrichment of Indian flora.

**Key words:** *Hygrophila erecta*, New record, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal.

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Hygrophila* R. Brown of Acanthaceae is one of the important cosmopolitan moisture loving genera comprising of about 100 species (Jiaqui *et al* 2011) and is widely distributed in tropical and subtropical regions of the world. But, Mabberley (2005) assigned only 25 species for the genus. According to APG III the family Acanthaceae is placed in the order Lamiales to the clade Lamiids under the core class Euasterids I of Core Eudicots (Chase & Reveal 2009). During the floristic explorations in various water bodies of *Terai* and *Duars* region of West Bengal, some specimens of *Hygrophila* R. Brown was collected by authors from the road side ephemeral wetlands of Siliguri – Jalpaiguri region along the NH-31 at Dash-Dargaon and at Pani-kouri during October-November, 2013. After critical investigations with the help of relevant literatures including Clarke (1884), Cook (1996), Ningombam & Singh (2010), matching specimens at CAL, consulting with the digital herbarium sheets from K and expert consultation at Botanical Survey of India, the identity of the plant has been confirmed as *Hygrophila erecta* (N.L. Burman) Hochreutiner. The up-to-date nomenclature has been verified with the [www.theplantlist.org](http://www.theplantlist.org) (2014). The species is known to grow in China, India (basically in North & South Andamans and Manipur), Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam (Wu *et al* 2004; Ningombam & Singh 2010). However, the occurrence of the species in West Bengal was unknown. The plant was found growing in association with *Ludwigia adscendens* (Linnaeus) H. Hara, *Persicaria hydropiper* (Linnaeus) Spach, *Marsilea minuta* Linnaeus, *Lindernia crustacea* (Linnaeus) F. Müller, *Ipomoea carnea* N. Jacquine, *Acmella calva* (de Candolle) R.K. Jansen, *Ageratum conyzoides* Linnaeus, *Commelina benghalensis* Linnaeus, *Cyperus cephalotes* Vahl, *Cyperus haspan* Linnaeus and *Cynodon dactylon* (Linnaeus) Persoon.



**PLATE I.** *Hygrophila erecta* (N.L. Burman) Hochreutiner : **A.** The plant in the habitat; **B.** Bracts with calyx inside; **C.** Flower with bracts, lateral view; **D.** Flower in front view showing short and long stamens.

The morphological description, photograph, distribution and ecology for the species are provided in this paper.

The voucher specimens will be deposited in CAL and NBU.

*Hygrophila erecta* (N.L. Burman) Hochreutiner, Candollea 5: 230. 1934; Ningombam & Singh in Pleione 4(2): 317 – 320. 2010. *Ruellia erecta* N.L. Burman, Fl. Indica, 135. 1768.

**Plate I (A-D)**

Annual erect herbs to 1.5 m tall. Stems quadrangular, hairy below the nodes. Petiole 3 – 6 mm long, sulcate, hispid; lamina elliptic or oblong-obovate, 2.8 – 8.5 cm x 1.9 – 4.8 cm, entire or slightly undulate, rounded, base cuneate, both surfaces densely hirsute, veins depressed

above, with cystoliths in mesophyll. Flowers 3 – 4, clustered in leaf axils, sessile; bracts oblong - lanceolate, numerous, ca. 2 – 3 cm long, densely white hairy; calyx ca. 1.7 x 0.6 cm, 5-lobed; lobes linear-lanceolate, densely hairy; corolla light blue-violet, 2.3 cm long, tube ca. 6 mm long, pilose; tube basally cylindrical and ca. 2 mm wide, limb 2-lipped; lower lip oblong, 3-lobed, lobes broadly ovate, upper lip triangular, 2-lobed; stamens 4; filaments glabrous, longer pair ca. 7 mm long, shorter pair ca. 4 mm; ovary glabrous; style ca. 21 mm long, pilose. Capsule 1.3 – 1.6 cm long. Seeds blackish brown, pubescent.

**Exsiccate:** Dash-Dargaon, Jalpaiguri, *Anurag & AP Das 3105*, dated 15.10.2013 (CAL, NBU); Pani-kouri, Jalpaiguri, *Anurag & AP Das 3132*, dated 12.11.2013 (CAL, NBU).

**Distribution:** Pakistan, India [Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Manipur and now from West Bengal], Nepal, China, Japan, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines.

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