

***Pseudelephantopus* J.P. Rohr (Asteraceae) – a new generic record for North-East India from Assam, India**

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Abstract

Pseudelephantopus spicatus (Jussieu ex Aublet) C.F. Baker [Asteraceae] is reported here for the first time from Assam in North East India. It is only reported from Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal of India. The genus *Pseudelephantopus* Rohr is also recorded here as a new record for North East India from Assam. A detailed taxonomic description along with photographs, ecology and distributional details of the species are provided in the article.

Key words: *Pseudelephantopus*, New record, Assam, North East India

INTRODUCTION

Pseudelephantopus J.P. Rohr (Asteraceae : Vernoniae) is a small genus of only 2 species, distributed mostly in tropical America (Malbberley 2008; Robinson 1999) and Africa. Only one species of *Pseudelephantopus* is so far reported from India (Hajra *et al.* 1995).

While working on the herbaceous flora of Kamrup district (Metro) of Assam, a species of *Pseudelephantopus* has been collected. After a thorough survey of literature (Hajra *et al.* 1995, Bunwong & Chantaranonthai 2010; <http://www.efloras.org/>), critical examination and expert opinion, the plant has been identified as *Pseudelephantopus spicatus* (A. Jussieu ex Aublet) C.F. Baker, a species so far not recorded from North-Eastern part of India by earlier workers including (Kanjilal *et al.* 1938), Joseph (1968), Barua (1992), Barua & Nath (1998) and Chowdhury (2005). A perusal of literature reveals that this taxon is reported previously from Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal (Hajra *et al.* 1995).

The present record of *Pseudelephantopus spicatus* from Maligaon Gate No-1 Guwahati- 781011, district Kamrup (Metro), Assam is a new generic addition for North East India. The voucher specimens are deposited in GU-Herbarium and in the herbarium of the D.K. College, Mirza. A detailed taxonomic description, photographs along with phenology and ecological notes of the same has been provided in the present communication to facilitate its easy identification.

TAXONOMIC TREATMENT

Pseudelephantopus spicatus (A. Jussieu ex Aublet) C.F. Baker in Trans. Acad. Sci. St. Louis 12: 45, 55, 56. 1902; N.M. Dutta & D. Mitra in Ind. For. 87(5): 308. 1961. Hajra *et al.* Fl. India 13:346. 1995 *Elephantopus spicatus* A. Jussieu ex Aublet, Hist. Pl. Guiane 2: 808. 1775.

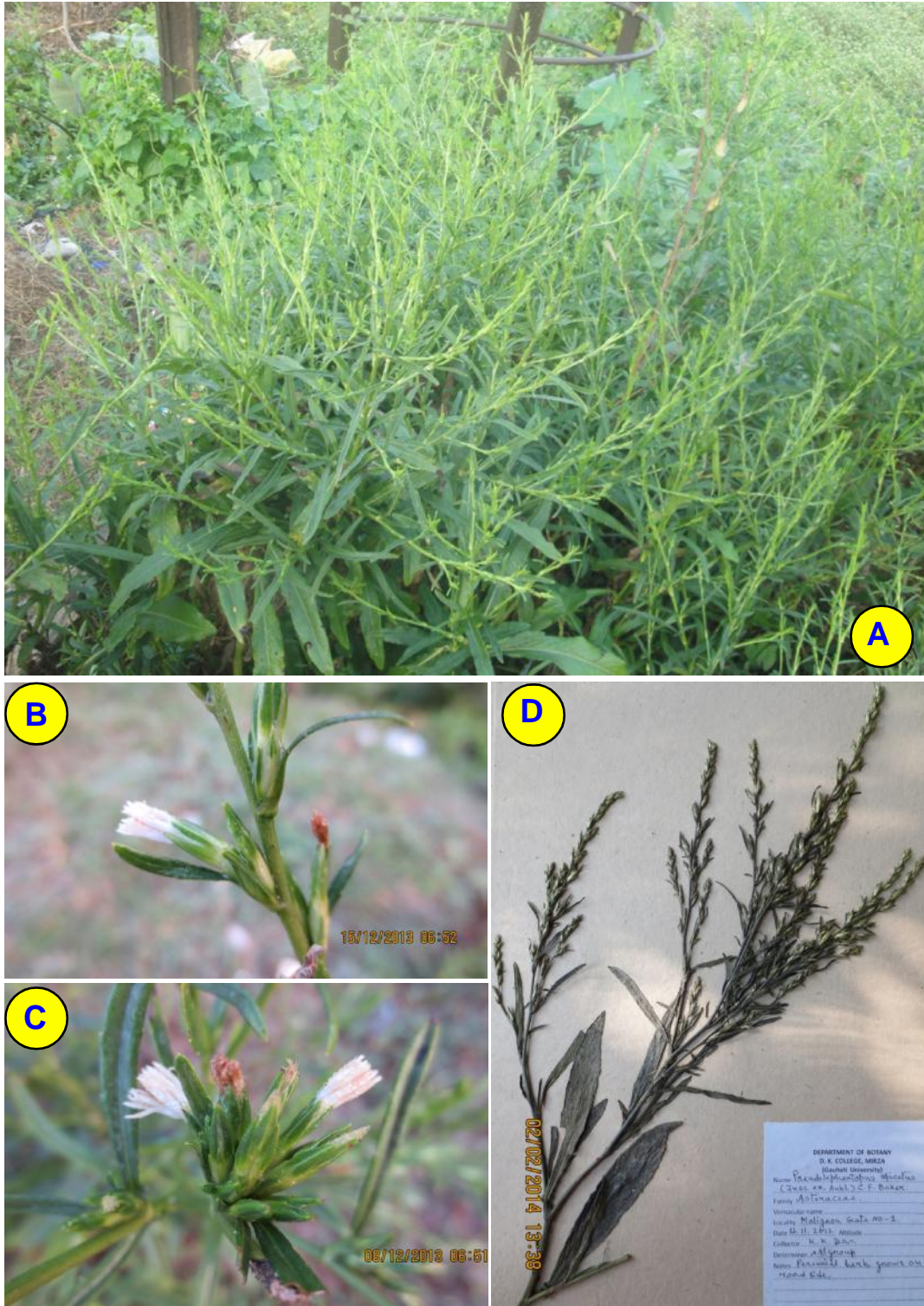


PLATE I: *Pseudelephantopus spicatus* (A. Jussieu ex Aublet) C.F. Baker: **A.** Habit; **B.** Capitulescence; **C.** Cluster of capitula from a node; **D.** Mounted voucher specimen

Rigid and rosette perennial herbs, 10 – 60 cm tall. Stem erect, branched, inconspicuously ribbed, puberulous. Leaves rosulate or alternate, subsessile, slightly amplexicaul, lower leaves oblong-obovate or oblong-spatulate 7cm – 20 cm x 1 – 6.5 cm, abaxially especially hirtellous on veins and densely glandular, adaxially scabrid, sparsely scabrid hairy or sub glabrous and glandular, lateral veins 8 – 11 paired, base attenuate, margin entire or remotely serrate, apex obtuse or shortly acute; upper leaves much shorter, linear – lanceolate, 3 – 13 cm x 0.2 cm – 2 cm, attenuate at both ends; petioles up to 2 cm long. Capitulescences terminal and axillary, in cluster of 1 – 8 capitula supported by narrowly linear foliaceous bracts, clusters arranged in spikes. Capitula tubular or oblong, 1.4 – 1.8 cm long. Receptacle flat, 1 – 1.5 mm in diameter, glabrous. Phyllaries light or dark green, 6 – 12 mm long, margin entire or filiferous, outer surface pilose, eglandular; the outer lanceolate, apex acute; the inner obovate – lanceolate or oblong, apex acute. Florets 4, salverform, white, zygomorphic, glabrous. Corolla tube 5 – 9 mm long; lobes 5, 2.5 – 3 mm long, lanceolate. Anthers 1.5 – 2 mm long, apical appendages acute, bases acute. Style white, 5 – 9 mm long, branches ca. 2mm long. Achene clavate, ca. 4 – 5 mm long, 10 – ribbed, hairy on the ribs. Pappus bristles 6 – 9, 2 longest and N-shaped at apex, 1 series, persistent.

Flowering: October – January

Ecology: Naturalized in open areas especially along roadside.

Distribution: Topical America, Africa, India (Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and now from Assam), China, Taiwan, Philippines, Malay Archipelago, Jamaica, Hong Kong and Thailand.

Exsiccatae: India: Assam, Kamrup district (Metro), Maligaon, Gate No-1 (Guwahati-11), *K.K.Das 271*, dated 12.11.2012. [GU]

Notes: The Subtribe Elephantopinae is characterized by having four florets in the capitulum, zygomorphic corolla with a deeper sinus toward the center of the capitulum, and anthers with short spurs. Regional floras *viz.* Assam (Kanjilal *et al* 1938), Nongpoh (Joseph 1968), and Tripura (Deb 1983) recorded the occurrence of *Elephantopus scaber* Linnaeus in North-East India. *Pseudelephantopus spicatus* (Jussieu *ex* Aublet) C.F. Baker is distinguished from *E. scaber* with its pappus that is N-shaped at the apex of the two longest bristles, spicate capitulescences and the capitulum or capitula are not surrounded by three broadly foliaceous bracts.

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213 *Pseudelephantopus* - a generic record for NE India

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