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Liparis elliptica Wight, (Orchidaceae: Tribe Malaxideae; Subfamily Epidendroideae) A New Addition to the Orchid Flora of West Bengal, India

During recent botanical exploration undertaken on the Orchid Flora of West Bengal, the author came across some interesting specimens of epiphytic Orchid species from Today forest near Tangta village, District Kalimpong of West Bengal. After critical examination and comparison with other authenticated specimens and literatures, it was identified as *Liparis elliptica* Wight. A perusal of literature like Bruhl, 1926; Chowdhery, 1998; Hara, 1966, 1971; Hooker, 1888; King and Pantling, 1898; Kurzweil, 2008; Ohashi, 1975; Pearce and Cribb, 2002; Pradhan, 1979; Pradhan and Pradhan, 1997; Rao, 2007; Yonzone *et al.*, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Kumar *et al.* 2013, Yonzone, 2015 and Ghosh and Mallick, 2014 revealed that the occurrence of this species has not been reported earlier from West Bengal. Therefore, this

is for the first time that author is reporting this species from West Bengal, India. The newly collected specimens were processed and mounted on standard herbarium sheets followed Jain and Rao (1977) and have been deposited in the Herbarium of Department of Botany, St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling and Herbarium of Taxonomy and Ethnobiology Research Laboratory, Cluny Women's College, Kalimpong for future reference. A detailed taxonomic account of the species based on the fresh specimens along with photographs (Fig. 1), habitat, relevant synonym, morphological features, flowering and fruiting, altitudinal range, field status and global distribution is provided in the present communication for easy identification of the species in the habitat.



Fig. 1: *Liparis elliptica* Wight

Taxonomic Enumeration

Liparis elliptica Wight, Icon. Pl. Ind. Orient 5: t. 1735. 1852; *Liparis wightii* Rchb. f., Walper, Ann. Bot. Syst. 6: 218. 1861; *L. hookeri* Ridley, J. Linn. Soc., Bot. 22: 288. 1886; *L. concava* Schltr., Feddes Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg. 9: 283. 1911.

Epiphytic plant, 13-25 cm tall. Pseudobulbs 1.7-3.4 × 1.2-2cm, clustered, laterally compressed, flattened, rugose, ribbed, subrhomboid to globose, enclosed in imbricate broad sheathing leaf base; pseudobulb and leaf sheath enclosed by fibrous sheaths. Leaves 2 or 3, 6-15 × 1.7-2.8 cm, arise apex of pseudobulb, leathery, oblong-oblancheolate, acute, dorsally keeled, 8-12 indistinct longitudinal nerves, tapering and shortly petiolate at base. Inflorescence 7-20 cm long, arise from the apex of pseudobulb, sub-erect or pendent, laxly to subdensely many-flowered; peduncle 5-12 cm long, compressed or flat, bi-winged, smooth, bracteates, peduncle bract distant, narrowly lanceolate, acute to acuminate; rachis 5-10 cm long, glabrous, winged, smooth, pendulous with many pedicellate flowers; floral bracts 2.7-5 × 0.9-1.2 mm, lanceolate, acute; pedicellate ovary 2-3 mm long, glabrous. Flowers 4-6 mm across (sepal to sepal), pendent, green, glabrous. Sepals 3-5 × 1.7-1.9 mm; dorsal sepal 4-5 × 1.7-2 mm; lateral sepals 3.4-4.3 × 1.7-2 mm, sub-equal, spreading, oblong-elliptic, subacute, glabrous with a central vein. Petals 3.4-4 × 1.5-2 mm, filiform to linear, acute, solitary-nerved. Lip ca 3.3-3.9 × 2.6-3 mm, suborbicular, irregularly tri-lobed, lobes undulate, apex acute. Column ca 2.1-2.3 mm long, slightly curved, base thickened. Anther ca 0.5-0.6 mm long, sub-orbicular, yellowish-green; pollinia ca 0.2 mm long, narrowly triangular or clavate, translucent yellow. Fruit capsule, pendent, subglobose, ridged; stalk curved.

Flowering and Fruiting: October to February.

Specimen examined: INDIA: West Bengal, Today forest near Tangta village, Herbarium SJC, Darjeeling and CWC, Kalimpong, 1570 m, 19.02.2019, 1310 - 1990 m, Rajendra Yonzzone 1423, (VIC).

Field status: Sparsely distributed in the surrounding areas 300 m². of Today forest.

Distribution: Sri Lanka, Nepal, India (Eastern Himalayan regions), Myanmar, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Java to New Caledonia and Fiji.

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