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Pogostemon peethapushpum (Lamiaceae), a new species from India

A. K. PRADEEP

ABSTRACT

PRADEEP, A. K. (1998). *Pogostemon peethapushpum* (Lamiaceae), a new species from India. *Candollea* 53: 419-422. In English, French and English abstracts.

Pogostemon peethapushpum from India is described as a species new to science and illustrated. Its relationship with *Pogostemon travancoricus* Bedd. and *P. hedgei* V. S. Kumar & Sharma are discussed.

RÉSUMÉ

PRADEEP, A. K. (1998). *Pogostemon peethapushpum* (Lamiaceae), une nouvelle espèce des Indes. *Candollea* 53: 419-422. En anglais, résumés français et anglais.

Pogostemon peethapushpum est une espèce nouvelle, décrite et illustrée, des Indes. Ses affinités avec *P. travancoricus* Bedd. et *P. hedgei* V. S. Kumar & Sharma sont examinées.

KEY-WORDS: *Pogostemon* – LAMIACEAE – Vellarimala – Kerala – India.

Introduction

The genus *Pogostemon* Desf. (Lamiaceae) includes about 96 species of herbs and shrubs chiefly distributed from Indomalaya to Australia (MABBERLEY, 1997). The genus has about 45 species in India, of which 17 species are endemic. SAMPATH KUMAR & SHARMA (1995) have recently described two new taxa of *Pogostemon* from the Western Ghats of Kerala in South India. While preparing a floristic inventory of Vellarimala on the northern part of the Ghat section in Kozhikode district, the author came across a small population of *Pogostemon* in the wet evergreen forests at an elevation above 1200 metre, which on closer scrutiny turned out to be a hitherto undescribed species.

In the present paper, the new species *Pogostemon peethapushpum* is described, illustrated and its affinities are discussed.

Description

***Pogostemon peethapushpum* Pradeep, spec. nova (Fig. 1).**

Pogostemon peethapushpum Pradeep, sp. nov., *P. travancoricus* et *P. hedgei* affinis, sed inflorescentia axillari cymosa paniculata, pedicellis non reflexis, corolla lutea, staminibus didynamis, ovario absque cupulatus glandulis ab eis differt.

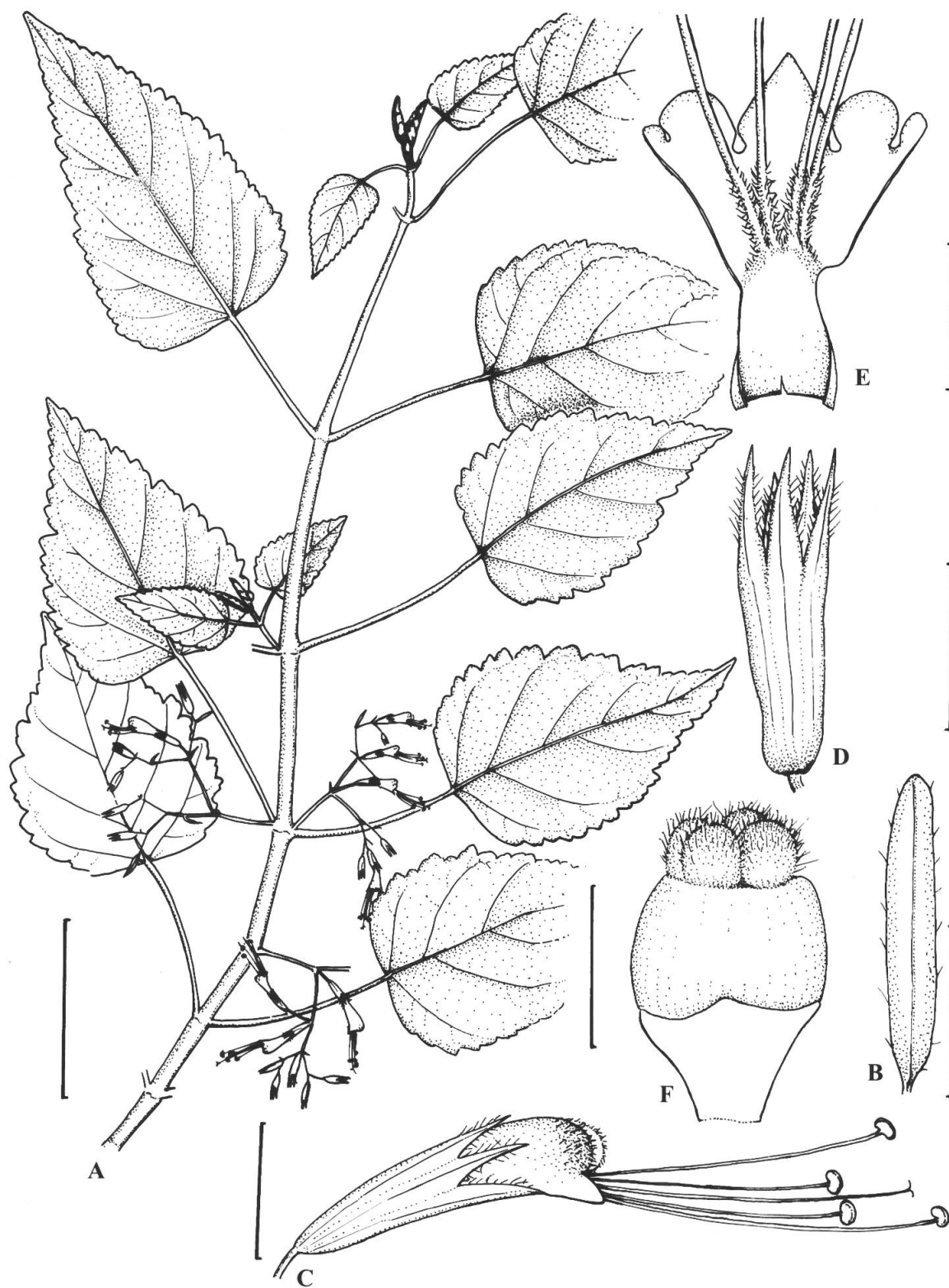


Fig. 1. – *Pogostemon peethapushpum* Pradeep. A, flowering branch; B, bracteole; C, flower; D, calyx; E, corolla split opened showing basal part of staminal filaments; F, ovary. A-F from Pradeep 5489. Scales: A = 6 cm; B = 2 mm; C, D & E = 5 mm; F = 1 mm.

Type: INDIA: Kerala, Kozhikode Dist., Vellarimala, 11°25.877'N, 76°06.765'E, ca. 1820 m, 12 Jan 1997 (fl), *Pradeep* 5489 (holotype, K; isotypes, L, PBL CALI).

Scandent shrub to ca 1.5 m long. Stem and branchlets quadrangular, glabrous, often tinged with purple, sometimes rooting from lower nodes. Leaves opposite, decussate; lamina ovate, 6-12 × 5-7 cm, subcoriaceous, acute to acuminate at apex, truncate at base, margin doubly serrate-dentate, dark green above and pale beneath, 3-5-nerved, nerves prominent beneath, sparsely simple hairy on upper surface, glabrescent on lower surface; petiole 5-8 cm long, slender, glabrous. Inflorescence of few flowered axillary cymose panicle, 5-9 cm long; bracts subulate, 6-8 × 1-1.5 mm, sparsely hairy, margin entire, apex subobtusate; bracteoles linear, 2-3 mm long, sparsely hairy. Flowers erect; pedicel 1-6 mm long, glabrous. Calyx tubular, 8-10 mm long, tube 5-6 mm long, prominently 6-nerved, glabrous, 5-toothed, teeth 3-4 mm long, subequal, triangular, long acuminate, margin hispid. Corolla yellow, funnel-shaped, 8-9 mm long, tube 6 mm long; upper lip 3-lobed, lobes subequal, rotund, 2 × 2 mm, glabrous inside and densely hispid outside; lower lip entire, ovate-lanceolate, 2.5 × 2 mm, subacute at apex, veins conspicuous. Stamens 4, exserted, didynamous, upper ones 17-19 mm long, lower ones 11-13 mm long, densely hairy towards base; anthers yellow, reniform, 1 mm in diameter, unilocular. Disc ca. 1 mm long, subentire, glabrous; ovary 4-partite, 0.5 mm long, oblong, glandular and simple hairy dorsally and apically; style 18-22 mm long, slender, bifid at apex; lobes equal, ca. 1 mm long. Nutlets not seen.

Etymology. – The specific epithet *peethapushpum* is derived from Malayalam, *peetha* meaning yellow and *pushpum* meaning flower, referring to the yellow flower of the plant.

Phenology. – Flowers from January to March; fruits from February to April.

Ecology. – Undergrowth of evergreen forest, usually along wet and semishady places in association with *Strobilanthes barbatus*, *S. neilgherensis* (Acanthaceae) and *Desmodium scalpe* (Fabaceae).

Distribution. – Known only from a single locality in the Vellarimala (S. India), between 1500 and 2000 m altitude.

The genus *Pogostemon* has recently been reviewed by BHATTI & INGROUILLE (1997). They have recognised nine infrageneric taxa under this genus, mainly based on the nature of calyx and inflorescence characters. The new species, *P. peethapushpum* and its possibly related ones, *P. travancoricus* Beddome and *P. hedgei* Kumar & Sharma clearly belongs to the subg. *Allopogostemon* Bhatti & Ingr. sect. *Racemosus* (Benth.) Bhatti & Ingr. subsect. *Glabriusculus* (Briq.) Bhatti & Ingr.

P. peethapushpum can easily be distinguished from all other species of sect. *Glabriusculus* by its yellow flowers in loose axillary cymose panicles, unreflexed pedicels, didynamous stamens and in the absence of cup-like glands on the ovary. Among Indian pogostemons, it comes closer to *P. travancoricus* in its foliage, symmetrical calyx and in the absence of moniliform staminal hairs. But *P. peethapushpum* differs from it in its scandent habit, few flowered axillary paniculate inflorescences, yellow corolla, and didynamous stamens as against erect habit, many flowered lax terminal racemes, greenish corolla, equal staminal filaments and in having cup-like glands on the ovary. It is possibly more closely related to *P. hedgei* a scandent shrub from Southern Western Ghats of Kerala. However also that species has terminal racemiform inflorescence with close verticillasters, pale green corolla, subequal stamens and cup-like glands on the ovary. All the species of subsect. *Glabriusculus* can be identified as follows:

- 1a. Inflorescence an axillary cymose panicle; stamens didynamous *P. peethapushpum*
- 1b. Inflorescence a terminal unbranched verticillaster; stamens equal 2
- 2a. Ovary with cup-shaped glands 3
- 2b. Ovary lacking cup-shaped glands *P. hedgei*
- 3a. Inflorescence lax; calyx glabrous within and outside; calyx teeth glabrous *P. travancoricus*

- 3b. Inflorescence dense; calyx pubescent either within or outside; or on both surfaces; calyx teeth ciliate4
- 4a. Petiole > 4 cm long; hairs on stem and inflorescence 8-9-celled *P. speciosus*
- 4b. Petiole ≤ 4 cm long; hairs on stem and inflorescence 5-6-celled5
- 5a. Annulus of hairs in the calyx throat; calyx teeth conspicuously hairy; filaments inserted at the same height *P. reflexus*
- 5b. Annulus of hairs around the calyx throat, conspicuously tufted at teeth sinuses; filaments inserted at different heights *P. artopurpureus*

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