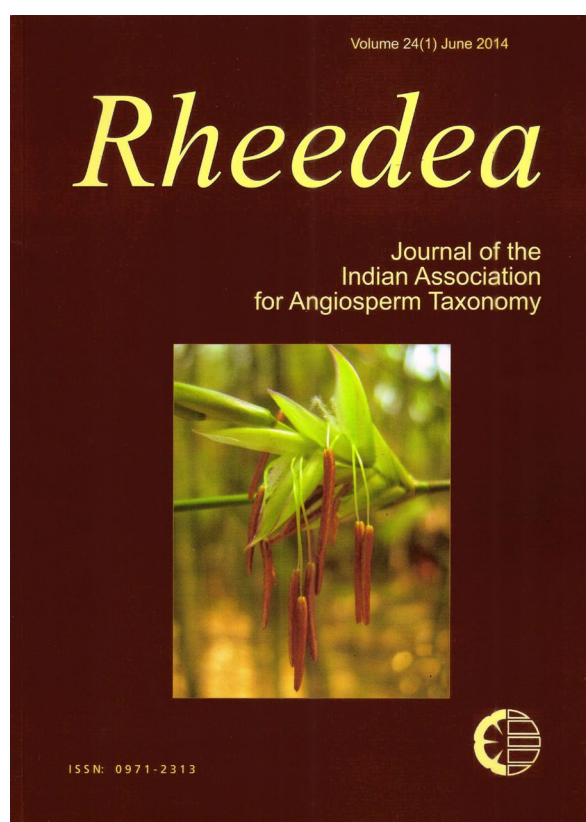




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Acanthospermum consobrinum (Asteraceae) - A new record for India

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Abstract

Acanthospermum consobrinum S.F. Blake, an American species, is recorded for the first time from Bangalore, Karnataka. A detailed description notes and illustration are provided for easy identification.

Keywords: *Acanthospermum consobrinum*, Asteraceae, New record, Karnataka, India

Introduction

There are 6 species of *Acanthospermum* such as *A. australe* (Loeff.) Kuntze, *A. consobrinum* S.F. Blake, *A. glabratum* (DC.) Willd., *A. hispidum* DC., *A. humile* B.L. Rob. and *A. microcarpum* have been reported globally. Though all the 6 species are originally native to America, the spiny nature of the fruits made easy transportation and naturalization of this genus in the Old World and elsewhere (Mabberley 2008). However, In India, Genus *Acanthospermum* is represented by two species *A. hispidum* and *A. australe*, of which the latter reported from Karnataka recently (Haleshi *et al.* 2012).

During one of our regular botanical surveys, few specimens of *Acanthospermum* were collected from the vicinity of Bangalore city. On critical examination, these specimens were confirmed as *A. consobrinum*. This species has so far not been reported from India and therefore it forms a new distributional report to the country. All the voucher specimens are deposited in FRLH, Bangalore, India.

1. Plants erect; flowers yellow; cypselas triangular *A. hispidum*
1. Plants procumbent or prostrate; flowers white; cypselas oblongoid-fusiform 2
2. Cypselas without apical spines; prickles arranged only along the ribs, coiled at apex *A. australe*
2. Cypselas with 2 apical spines; prickles arranged along the ribs and scattered all over, hooked at *A. consobrinum*

Acanthospermum consobrinum S.F. Blake, Cont. U.S. Natl. Herb. 20: 383-392. 1921; Stuessy, *Rhodora*. 72: 106-109. 1970. **Fig. 1**

Dichotomously branched, procumbent herb. Stems striate with many-celled pilose hairs; Leaves 1.2-2.1 × 0.5-1 cm, rhombic to obovate, acute at apex, cuneate or sessile at base, coarsely dentate-serrate, 3-nerved little above from base, sparsely appressed pilose hairy. Heads solitary in the axils and the forks of the stem, 5-7 mm across during anthesis. Phyllaries 5, ovate. Ray florets 5-7, yellow; disc florets about 7, glandular. Cypselas c. 8 × 4 mm, fusiform-obovoid, distinctly 5-7-ridged, gland dotted; apical spines 2, one is straight and the other almost perpendicular, curved outside when dry, prickles along the ribs and scattered all over, hooked at apex.

Flowering & Fruiting: August-January.

Specimen examined: INDIA, **Karnataka**, Bangalore District, Hessaraghatta Hobli, Rajangunte, Madappana Halli, 920 m, 01.11.2004, N.M. Ganesh Babu 46289 (FRLH).

Notes: A few plants of this species had been noticed in the newly laid pathway in the FRLHT campus garden. Interestingly, this species was found only on the newly laid pathway in the campus garden. Therefore, a search for this species was conducted in and around Madappana Halli area from where the gravelly red soil was procured for laying pathway. This search resulted in finding a

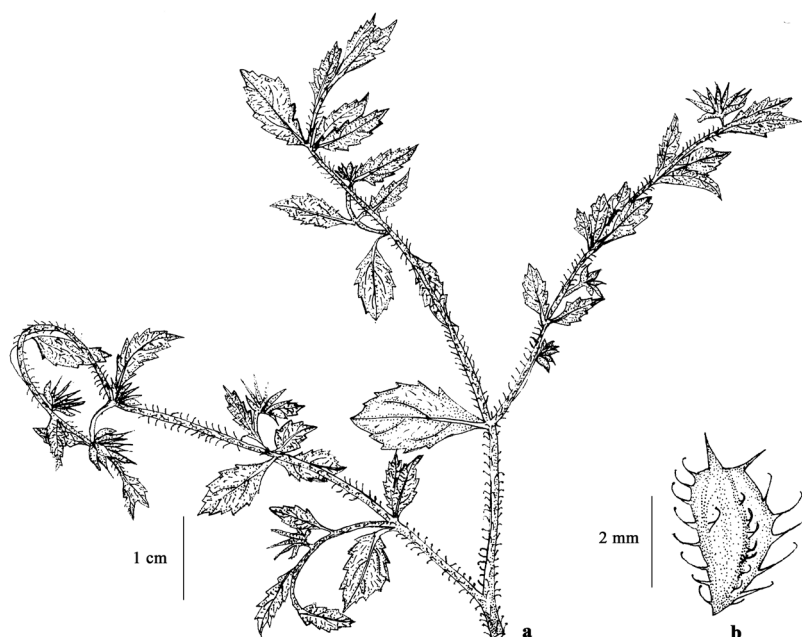


Fig. 1. *Acanthospermum consobrinum* S.F. Blake: **a.** Flowering and fruiting branch; **b.** Cypsel.

population of more than 500 individuals of this species in a fallow field covering 5 acres area. This locality had number of cattle and poultry farms established and it was documented that the animal feeds had been imported from many overseas companies. Most probably this species might be entered here through these cattle feeds. The restricted occurrence of this species around Madappana Halli areas of Bangalore implies that this place could be the invading point to the country. Owing to the recent occurrence, the people were unaware of this plant and its use; however, Mabberley (2008) reports that this species is used as a contraceptive in Uruguay since long. As this species started growing as invasive weed, and the locality is well known for sand mining that are transported to different places, this plant may also become another obnoxious weed as like *A. hispidum* in near future.

Ecology: Growing in open, dry, waste lands of red sandy loam soils, often in disturbed areas.

Distribution: Paraguay, southern South America and India: It is recorded from Karnataka as a new report from India.

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