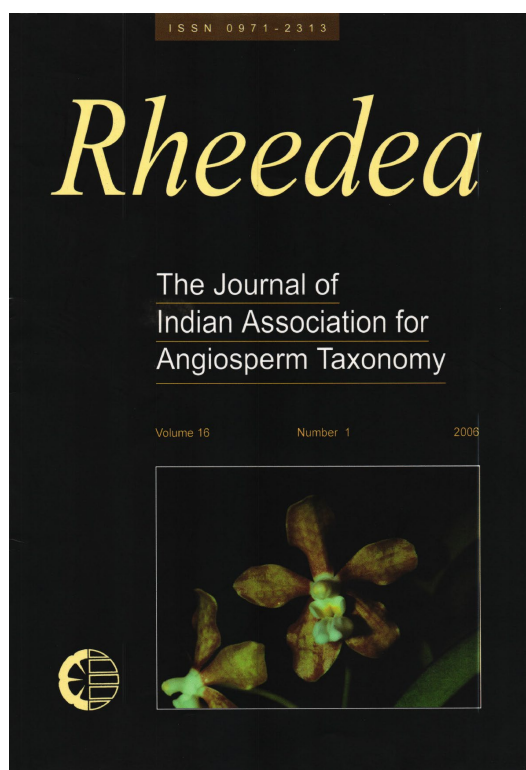




## A New species of *Eriocaulon* L. (Eriocaulaceae) from Anamalai Hills of Kerala, India

Vijaya Sankar R., Ravikumar K. & N.M. Ganesh Babu



How to cite:

**Vijaya Sankar R., Ravikumar K. & N.M. Ganesh Babu 2006.** A New species of *Eriocaulon* L. (Eriocaulaceae) from Anamalai Hills of Kerala, India. *Rheedia* 16(1): 59-61.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.22244/rheedia.2006.16.01.11>

Received: 17.01.2005

Revised and accepted: 30.05.2006

Published in print: 30.06.2006

Published Online: 30.06.2006



# A New Species of *Eriocaulon* L. (Eriocaulaceae) from Anamalai Hills of Kerala, India

R. Vijaya Sankar, K. Ravikumar and N. M. Ganesh Babu

Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), # 74/2, Jarakabande Kaval,  
 Yelahanka, Bangalore 560 064, Karnataka, India.

## Abstract

*Eriocaulon devendranii*, a new species in Eriocaulaceae, is described and illustrated from Anamalai in the Western Ghats of Kerala. This species is allied to *E. xeranthemum* Mart. found almost throughout India, Nepal and Myanmar but differs in having spathes nearly equalling the peduncles, involucre bracts with multifid apices, obtuse floral bracts and obtuse male perianth lobes.

Keywords: *Eriocaulon devendranii*, New species, Anamalai, Kerala

## Introduction

Field surveys conducted in Anappady Medicinal Plants Conservation Area (MPCA) in Palakkad district, Kerala during November 2003 resulted in the collection of several endemic and endangered taxa. There was a curious *Eriocaulon* L. among them which could not be identified with any of the published taxa (Ansari & Balakrishnan, 1994; Das Das & Singh 2001; Gaikwad & Yadav, 2002; Karthikeyan *et al.*, 1989; Puneekar *et al.*, 2003). Critical study of allied species and opinion received from an expert helped to confirm its novelty. It is described and illustrated here as a new species.

***Eriocaulon devendranii*** R. Vijaya Sankar, K. Ravikumar *et* N.M. Ganesh Babu, *sp. nov.* **Fig.1**

Valde affinis *E. xeranthemum* Mart. sed differt spathae fere pedunculis aequans, bracteae involucre polyfidae ad apicem, bracteae floralis obtusae et mas perianthium lobis obtusae.

**Types:** INDIA, Kerala, Palakkad district: Chittur taluk, Sungam range, Anappady, in between Check Post and Forest Guest House, on filmy moist soils of exposed rocky areas, 550 m, 26.11.2003, R. Vijaya Sankar, K. Ravikumar & N.M. Ganesh Babu 73127 (Holotype & Isotypes, FRLH).

*Acaulescent herbs*, up to 2 cm high, roots fibrous. *Leaves* 7-15, rosulate, linear-oblong, 0.5-1 x 0.1-0.2 cm, glabrous, sheathing at base, acute at apex, entire along

margin. *Peduncles* 1-5, up to 1 cm long, erect, glabrous, broadened at apex; sheaths 5-8 mm long, glabrous; limb ovate, acute at apex, margin entire. *Heads* hemispherical, upto 5 mm across, straw coloured; receptacles convex, glabrous; involucre bracts erect or spreading, ovate-oblong, multifid and acuminate at apex, 2.5-3.5 x 0.5-1 mm, chartaceous, glabrous, straw coloured; floral bracts oblanceolate, c. 0.75 x 0.25 mm, cuneate at base, obtuse and hairy at apex. *Male flowers* shortly pedicellate; sepals connate into a spathe, c. 1 x 0.75 mm, cuneate at base, 3 lobed at apex; lobes obtuse and hoary at apex, dark brown; petals 3, united into a tube, c. 0.75 x 0.20 mm, glabrous; lobes 3, minute, subacute with a black gland at apex; anthers 6, ovoid, black. *Female flowers* subsessile; sepals 3, free, c. 0.75 mm long, dissimilar, the two lateral ones oblanceolate, obtuse and hairy at apex; the middle one linear, sparsely hairy at apex; petals 3, subequal, spatulate, c. 0.60 x 0.20 mm, hyaline, obtuse with a black gland at apex, barbate, stipitate between sepals and petals; ovary subsessile, ovoid, c. 0.40 x 0.21 mm; style 3 fid. *Seeds* ellipsoid-oblong, subacute at apex, c. 0.45 x 0.21 mm, pale yellow; cells of seed coat transversely elongated, aligned in vertical rows; appendages 2-4 from the upper transverse radial walls, setiform, truncate to notched at apex.

*Flowering & Fruiting:* October-November.

*Habitat:* *Eriocaulon devendranii* is locally common in marshy microhabitats of open forest areas, grasslands, along streams and roadsides in association with *Drosera indica* L., *Eragrostiella bifaria*

(Vahl) Bor, *Eriocaulon quinquangulare* L., *E. truncatum* Buch.-Ham. ex Mart., *Murdannia* spp., *Oropetium thomaeum* (L.f.) Trin., *Smithia conferta* Sm. and *Lindernia* spp.

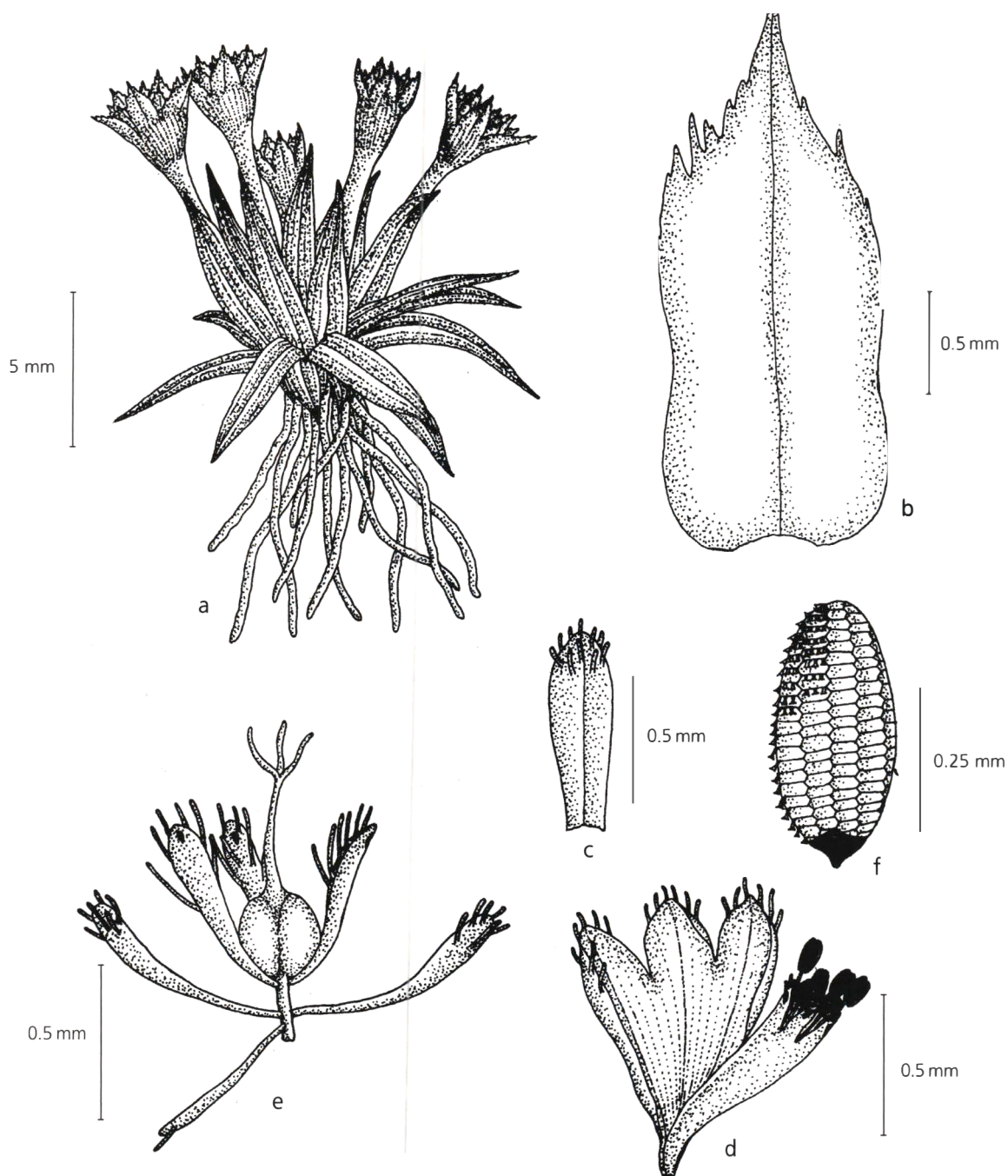


Figure 1. *Eriocaulon devendranii* R. Vijaya Sankar, K. Ravikumar et N.M. Ganesh Babu sp. nov - a. Habit; b. Involucral bract; c. Floral bract; d. Male flower; e. Female flower; f. Seed.

Table 1. Characters of *Eriocaulon devendranii* sp. nov. and its allied *E. xeranthemum* Mart.

<i>E. devendranii</i> sp. nov.	<i>E. xeranthemum</i> Mart.
Plants < 2.5 cm high	> 5 cm high.
Leaves < 1.5 cm long.	> 2 cm long.
Peduncles upto 1 cm long, stout.	upto 6.5 cm long, filiform.
Sheaths up to 0.8 cm long, nearly equalling the peduncles.	upto 3 cm long, much shorter than the peduncles.
Involucral bracts ovate-oblong, multifid at apex.	linear-oblong, acuminate at apex.
Floral bracts obtuse at apex.	truncate at apex.
Perianth lobes of male flowers obtuse at apex.	truncate at apex.

This species is allied to *E. xeranthemum* Mart., but differs in having spathes nearly equalling the peduncles, involucral bracts with multifid apices, obtuse floral bracts and obtuse male perianth lobes. (see Table 1.)

**Etymology:** The specific epithet is in honour of Shri Devendra Kumar Ved, I.F.S., Additional Director, FRLHT in recognition of his contributions in conservation of medicinal plants in India.

### Acknowledgements

Authors are thankful to Shri Darshan Shankar, Director, FRLHT, Bangalore for facilities. Thanks are also due to Dr R. Ansari, Director, Malabar Botanical Garden, Kozhikode district, Kerala for his expert opinion and confirmation of novelty of this species; Dr V.B. Hosagoudar, Scientist, Tropical Botanic Garden Research Institute, Thiruvananthapuram for rendering Latin diagnosis; Dr H.J. Chowdhery, Joint Director, Central National Herbarium, Botanical Survey of India, Howrah for supplying photocopy of Wallichian sheet of *Eriocaulon xeranthemum* Mart.; and Shri Mariyappan, Artist, SPKCES, Manonm-

aniam Sundaranar University, Alwarkurichi, Tamil Nadu for the illustration.

### Literature Cited

- Ansari, R. & N.P. Balakrishnan 1994. *The Family Eriocaulaceae in India*. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehra Dun.
- Das Das, S.K. & N.P. Singh 2001. Taxonomic studies on Eriocaulaceae in Karnataka State. *J. Econ. Taxon. Bot.* 25: 449-484.
- Gaikwad, S.P. & S.R. Yadav 2002. *Eriocaulaceae in Maharashtra*. In: T. Pullaiah (Ed.). *Biodiversity of India* 1: 256-341.
- Karthikeyan, S., S.K. Jain, M.P. Nayar & M. Sanjappa 1989. *Florae Indicae Enumeratio: Monocotyledonae*. Flora of India, Series 4. Botanical Survey of India, Calcutta.
- Punekar, S.A., Nilesh Vijay Malpure & P. Lakshminarasimhan 2003. Five new species of *Eriocaulon* L. (Eriocaulaceae) from the Western Ghats, India. *Rheedea* 13: 19-27.

Received : 17.1.2005

Revised and accepted : 30.5.2006