

Phlogacanthus parviflorus T. Anders (Acanthaceae): a new addition to the flora of Assam

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Abstract: *Phlogacanthus parviflorus* T. Anders. (Acanthaceae) is now reported for the first time from Balipara Reserve Forest, the buffer area of Nameri Tiger Reserve of Sonitpur district of Assam in North-east India. It was so far recorded from Myanmar, Patkoye Namyoon and East Bengal, India. Detailed taxonomic description and illustrations are provided for easy recognition of the species.

Keywords: *Phlogacanthus parviflorus*, new addition, Assam, India.

INTRODUCTION

During floristic study of Sonitpur district of Assam some specimens of a species of *Phlogacanthus* Nees (Acanthaceae) were collected by the authors from Balipara Reserve Forest, the buffer area of Nameri Tiger Reserve. On perusal of relevant literature (Nees, 1832; Anderson, 1867; Kurz, 1887; Clarke, 1884), critical examination and scrutiny of the herbarium specimens in ASSAM and CAL Herbaria resulted in the identification of the specimen as *Phlogacanthus parviflorus* T. Anders hitherto not reported from Assam and hence a new addition to the Flora of Assam. For future reference the voucher specimens are deposited at the Herbarium of Botany Department, Gauhati University (GUBH), CAL and ASSAM. Detailed taxonomic description and other relevant information is provided herewith for easy recognition of the species.

TAXONOMIC TREATMENT

Phlogacanthus parviflorus T. Anders. in Journ. Linn. Soc. 9: 506. 1867; C.B. Clarke in Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 4: 512. 1884; A.S. Chauhan in Hajra, Contrib.Fl. Namdapha 243. 1996.

Type: INDIA, Assam, Sonitpur District, Balipara, January 5, 2015, 26°56.159'N / 092°48.593' E; Alt- 111 m, Barnali Dutta & Namita Nath 15 (Holotype: GUBH; Isotype: ASSAM). INDIA, Assam, Jorhat district, homesteads of Hollongapar, near Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary, 28.03.2015, 26°56.130' N; 092°48.572' E, Alt- 100m, B. Dutta 27 (Paratype: GUBH).

Vernacular Name: Tita phul (Assamese)

Shrubs up to 3-4 m high; stem stout, quadrangular; leaves 28-30 × 6-8 cm, broadly lanceolate, acuminate at both ends, paler and glabrous beneath; lateral nerves 12-13 pairs on each side. Inflorescence 23-26 × 7-9 cm, terminal; bracts 2, 1-1.1 cm; bracteoles 4, 0.5-0.6 cm. Calyx linear lanceolate, 1.3-1.5cm. Corolla 2.6-3 cm, tubular, widened upwards, dark red; stamens 2, exserted. Gynoecium deep red, 2.3-2.5 cm; ovary glabrous.

Flowering. Dec-Feb; **Fruiting.** Jan-March.

Distribution: **World:** India, Myanmar (Patkoye Namyoon); **India:** East Bengal and SE Assam.

Habitat: In hilly forests between 100-111 m above sea level.

Uses: The leaves and the flowers are cooked and eaten as vegetables. The flowers are boiled with alkali solution and eaten with fish. The decoction of the leaves is used in cold, fever and sore throat.

Notes: This species was recorded to be found in Assam by Clarke (1884). However, it was not included in any subsequent works (Kanjilal *et al.*, Fl. Assam 3: 443. 1939; Deb. Fl. Tripura 2: 295. 1983; Giri *et al.*, Materials Fl. Arunachal Pradesh 2: 248. 2008). Table1 provides diagnostic morphological characters of *Phlogacanthus parviflorus*.

Table 1. Diagnostic morphological characters of *Phlogacanthus parviflorus*

Characters	<i>P. parviflorus</i>
Habit	Shrub, 3 m long
Inflorescence	23-26 cm long
Flower colour	Dark red
Leaves	Broadly lanceolate
Gynoecium	Deep red

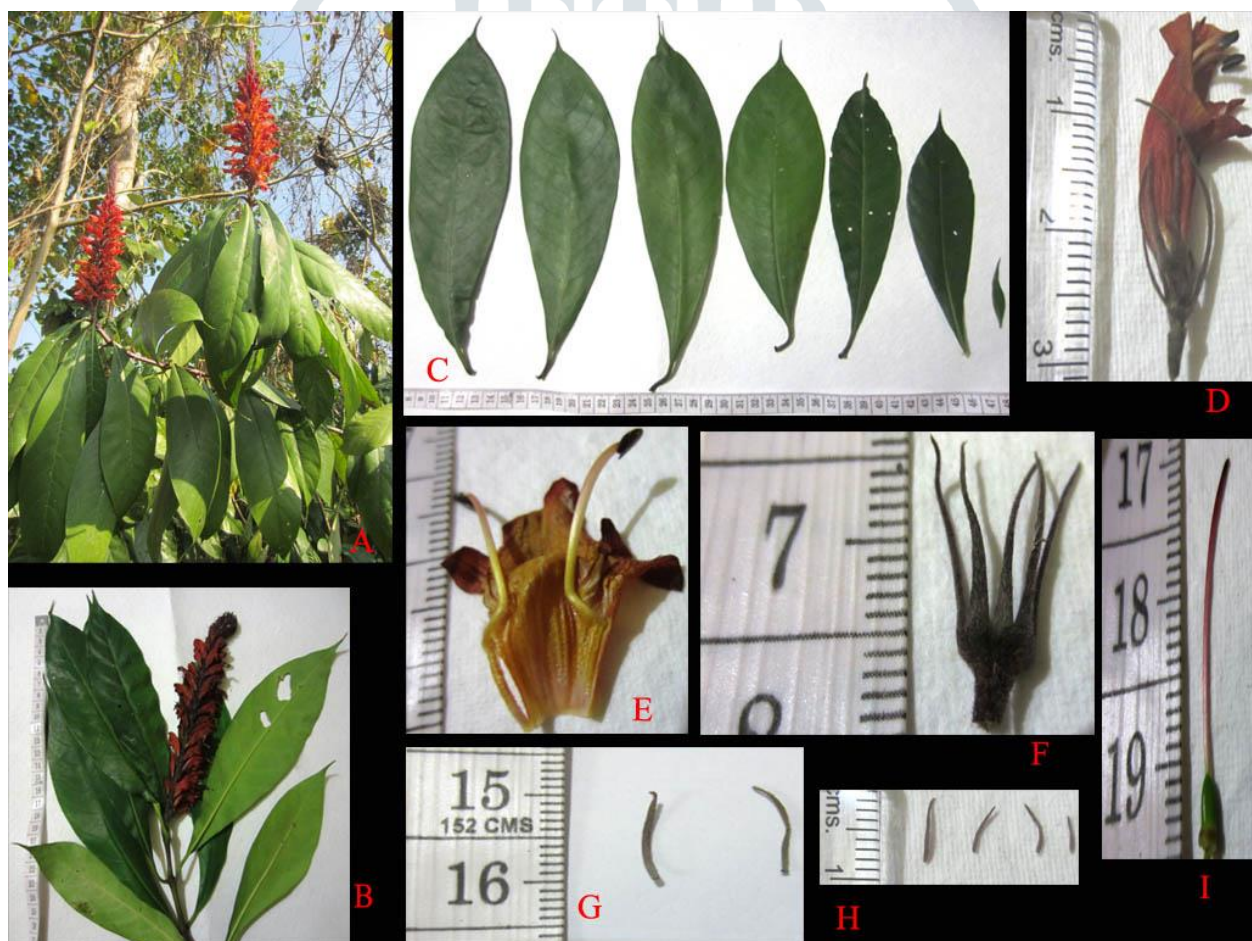


Fig 1. *Phlogacanthus parviflorus* T. Anders. A. Habit in natural habitat; B. Inflorescence; C. various size and shape of leaves; D. Complete flower; E. Corolla with androecium; F. Calyx; G. Bracts; H. Bracteoles; I. Gynoecium.

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