Himalaiella lushaiensis (Asteraceae), a new species from India

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Abstract

Himalaiella lushaiensis (Asteraceae) from India is described and illustrated. It is compared in morphology and distribution with H. natmataungensis and H. foliosa. A key to all the species of the genus Himalaiella is provided in aid of their identification.

Keywords: Cardueae, Compositae, Mizoram

Introduction

Himalaiella Raab-Straube (2003: 390), a small, mainly Himalayan genus recently segregated from the species-rich, north temperate Saussurea Candolle (1810: 156), is distinct by the uniseriate pappus, and rugose, muricate or squamulate pericarp with an irregularly toothed crown (Fujikawa & Ngai 2012). The molecular cladogram resulting from the ITS sequence data indicates that it is more closely related to Jurinea Cassini (1821: 140) than to Saussurea (Raab-Straube 2003). Fourteen species have already been included in Himalaiella, and they are distributed in Afghanistan, Bhutan, SW China, N India, Kashmir, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, N Thailand, N Vietnam and Iran (Fujikawa et al. 2007; Shi & Raab-Straube 2011; Fujikawa & Ngai 2012).

In 2012, in the course of examining specimens at the Herbarium of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, U.K. for the preparation of an account of certain genera of Asteraceae for the Flora of Pan-Himalayas, we found a hitherto undescribed species of Himalaiella from India, which is described below. A key to all the species of the genus is provided to facilitate their identification.

Himalaiella lushaiensis Y.S. Chen & Q. Yuan, sp. nov.

Type:—INDIA. [Mizoram], south of Lushai, open grassland, 1372 m, February 1932, M.L. Werger 422 (holotype K!). Figs. 1, 2 and 3(A & C).

Annual or biennial herbs. Stem 30–50 cm tall, 3–4 mm in diam., solitary, erect, apically branched, sparsely pubescent. Basal and lower stem leaves petiolate; petiole 2–5 cm long, base sheathed; leaf blade ovate to elliptic, 11–13 × 3.5–4.5 cm, bipinnately divided, abaxially white, conspicuously veined, arachnoid tomentose, gland-dotted, especially so along the veins, adaxially green, scabrous, sparsely stipigose, glandular scabrid; primary segments 8–10 pairs, elliptic, apex obtuse and mucronate; secondary lobes 1–3 pairs, obliquely triangular-ovate, sometimes toothed; upper stem leaves sessile, smaller, blade oblong, pinnatisect to pinnately lobed; lateral segments 4–7 pairs, leaf base enlarged and auriculate. Capitula few, usually in a racemiform synflorescence, pedunculate, peduncle 1–6 cm long. Involucre campanulate, 10–15 mm in diam. Phyllaries in 5–6 rows, arachnoid, gland-dotted; outer phyllaries oblong, 5–6 × 1.3–1.5 mm, leafy, gland-dotted, apex densely hairy, obtuse to acute; middle phyllaries oblong, 6–8 × 1.4–1.5 mm, subcoriaceous, deep-brownish hairy, apex acuminate; inner phyllaries narrowly elliptic-linear, deep-brownish hairy, ca. 10 × 1 mm, apex acuminate (Fig. 4). Receptacle bristles subulate, 4–8 mm long. Corolla purple, 9–10 mm long, gland-dotted, tube 4–5 mm long, limb 6–6.5 mm long, lobes 3–3.5 mm long. Achene brown, ca. 4 × 1.4 mm, 4-angled,
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