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PHYTOMORPHOLOGY

Ipomoea laxiflora HJ Chowdhery & Debta (Convolvulaceae): A new distribution record for Madhya Pradesh, India

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Abstract

During floristic explorations in Kanha National Park, Madhya Pradesh, the authors collected intriguing specimens from the family Convolvulaceae that were similar to *Ipomoea triloba* L. Upon careful examination, these specimens were identified as *Ipomoea laxiflora* H.J. Chowdhery & Debta. This new collection represents a novel distribution record for Madhya Pradesh. The article provides notes on the distribution of *Ipomoea laxiflora* and discusses its similarities with *Ipomoea triloba* L.

Keywords: Convolvulaceae, *Ipomoea laxiflora,* Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, New record

Introduction

Occurrence of a new species that was not reported earlier in vegetation assessment of an ecosystem provides opportunity to the researchers to explore the niche space that was occupied by such species and the dynamics it causes in such ecosystems (Malhotra, 1966; Muthu et al., 2025). While several workers report range extensions due to anthropogenic and climatic influences, very little is known on the actual population status of new distribution records reported by the taxonomists. The present work reports new distribution of *Ipomoea laxiflora* and discuss its probable niche overlap in the study region.

Results and discussion

During our survey in Kanha National Park, Madhya Pradesh, an interesting specimen of *Ipomoea* from the Linga grassland of Supkhar range was collected. After a critical examination of type specimens and relevant literature (Patil et al., 2022; Kapadane et al., 2022), it was identified as *Ipomoea laxiflora* H.J. Chowdhery & Debta. This represents a new distributional record of *Ipomoea laxiflora* for Madhya Pradesh, India.

Ipomoea laxiflora Chowdhery & Debta, Indian J. Forestry, 32(1): 120-121. 2009; Singh et al. Indian J. Forestry, 34(3): 335-338. 2011. Type: India, Uttarakhand,

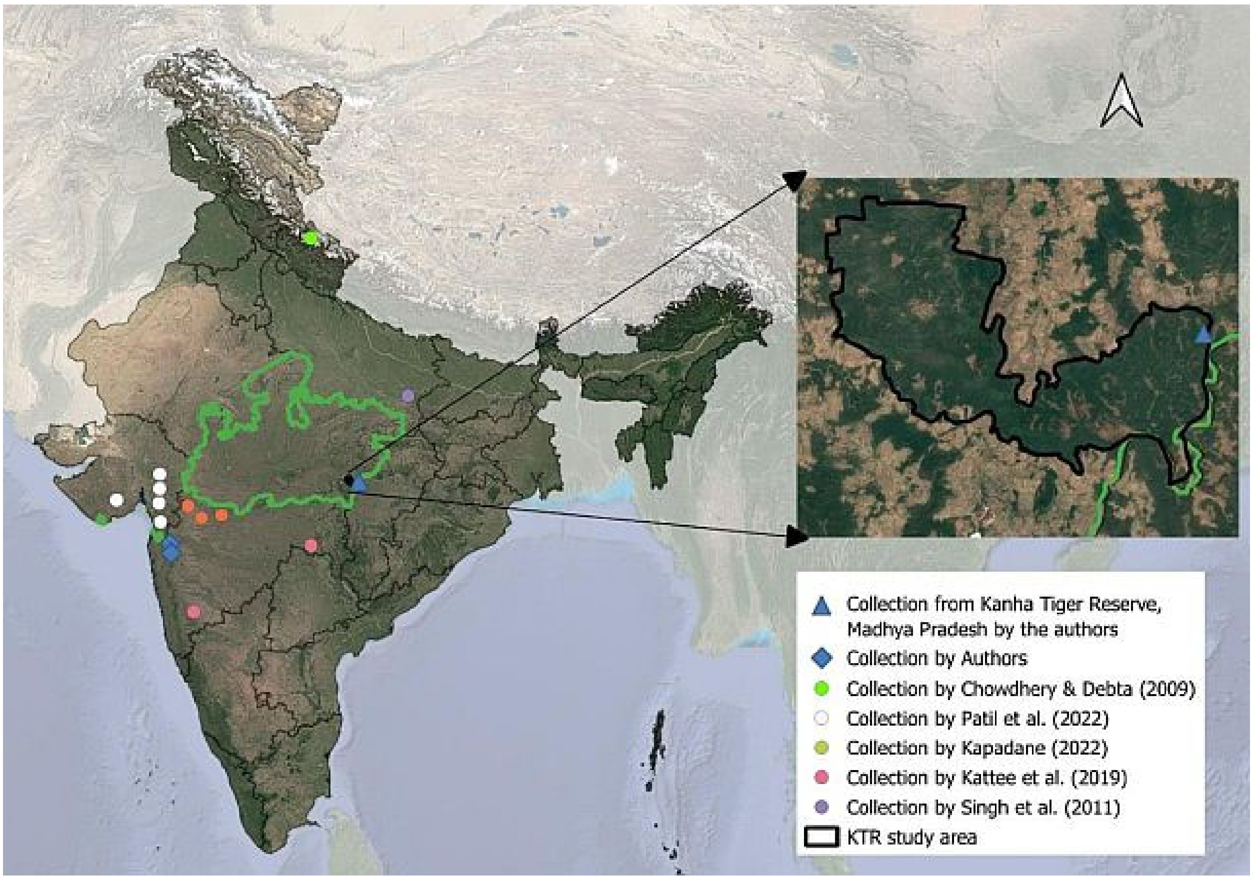

Figure 1. Distribution map of *Ipomoea laxiflora*

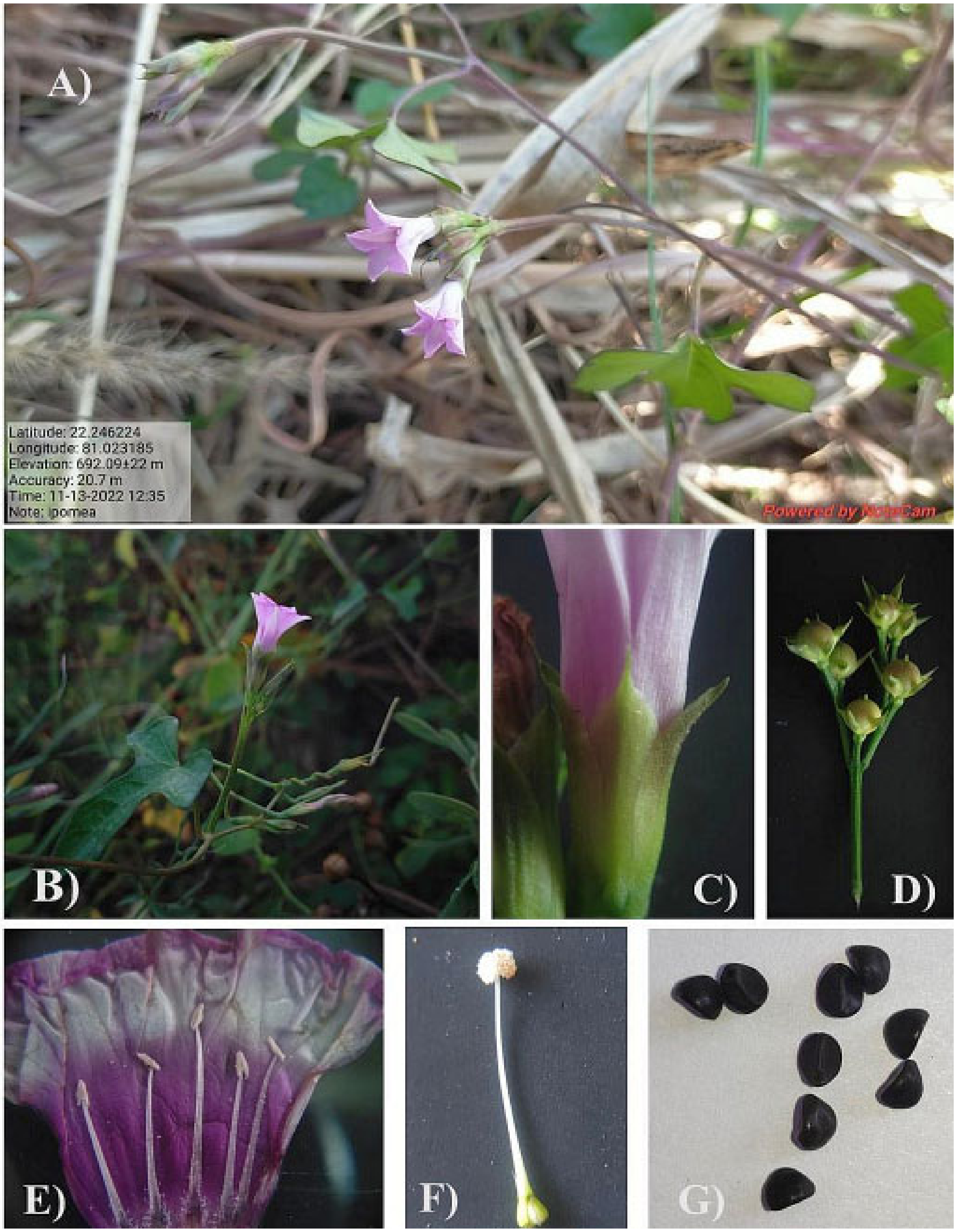

Figure 2. A, B - Habit; C - Close up showing calyx; D - Fruits; E - Dissected flower showing androecium; F - Gynoecium; G - Seed

Dehradun district, Kaulagarh Road, Botanical Survey of India Campus (holotype BSD, isotype CAL, 0000018586). Annual climber; 4-8 m long; stems purple-green, soft, circular to quadrangular, sparsely hairy at nodes; leaves petiolate, 4-10 × 4-10 cm, simple, cordate, entire, having great variations in shape, shallow to deeply trilobed, acuminate at apex; petioles 8-12 cm long, purple-green, glabrous; peduncles 5-9 cm long, purple-green, slightly verrucose, glabrous, swollen at apex; pedicels 2-4 mm long, glabrous, elongated in fruits; bracts 2.5-3.5 mm long, linear, caducous; flowers 3-7 in lax cymes, monoecious, clumped; calyx 5, fused, unequal, glabrous, green with purple shades at tip; lobes 0.7-0.9 × 0.2-0.3 cm, ovate-lanceolate; corolla c. 1.5 × 1.3 cm, funnel-shaped; limb 5-lobed; lobes apiculate; stamens 5; filaments unequal, 0.7-0.8 cm long, included, hairy at base; ovary c. 1 × 1.5 mm, glabrous; style c. 0.6-1 cm long; stigma unlobed or bilobed; capsules ovoid, 5 × 6 mm, 4-valved, with purple shades at young, glabrous; seeds 3-4 per capsule, ovoid to deltoid, brownish-black, c. 4 × 4 mm, glabrous.

Phenology: September - December

Distribution: India, so far, it is reported from Uttarakhand (Chowdhery & Debta, 2009), Uttar Pradesh (Singh et al., 2011), Gujarat (Patel & Nakar, 2022; Patil et al., 2022) and Maharashtra state (Kattee et al., 2019; Kapadane et al., 2022). The present collection from Madhya Pradesh makes a new addition to the flora of Madhya Pradesh (Fig. 1).

Habitat: Mostly on hilly terrain, foot hills and hill slopes as well as grasslands. It can also occur in habitats like agricultural farms or fencing, compound walls of industries, and along road sides.

Specimens examined: INDIA, Madhya Pradesh, Mandala district, Linga, 22.246224 N & 81.023185 E ANG, TRN, SH, MB: (ANG0058) (Fig. 2).

Conclusions

Morphologically *I. laxiflora* allied to *I. triloba* but it can be easily distinguished by densely flowered cyme, densely pubescent ovary and bristly hairy fruits *vs.* lax flowered cyme, glabrous ovary and fruits in *I. laxiflora.*

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Authors' contributions: All authors contributed equally.

Conflict of interest: Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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