



A new species of *Oberonia* (Orchidaceae) from Meghalaya, India

Shakya L.R. & R.P. Chaudhary



How to cite:

Shakya L.R. & R.P. Chaudhary 2000. A new species of *Oberonia* (Orchidaceae) from Meghalaya, India. *Rheedeia* 10(1): 55-58.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.22244/rheedeia.2000.10.01.05>

Published in print: 30.06.2000

Published Online: 01.01.2022

A new species of *Oberonia* (Orchidaceae) from Meghalaya, India

L.R. Shakya

Department of Botany, Amrit Campus, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

and

R.P. Chaudhary

Central Department of Botany, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Abstract

Oberonia raoii L.R. Shakya et R.P. Chaudhary (Orchidaceae), a new species from Meghalaya, India is described and illustrated.

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Oberonia* Lindl. consists of about 300 species distributed from South Africa through Asia to the Pacific. In India it is reported to have 53 species of which 22 are endemic (Sathish Kumar & Manilal, 1994).

Seidenfaden (1968) recorded 10 species and Ansari and Balakrishnan (1990) recorded 14 species of *Oberonia* from Meghalaya, India. King and Pantling (1897) established *Oberonia ritaii* based on the specimen collected by S.E. Rita from Jowai, Meghalaya, India.

During the course of revisionary studies on the genus *Oberonia* of the Himalayas and adjoining areas, we came across an herbarium specimen collected by Sir Robert Pantling housed at the Central National Herbarium (CAL), Howrah, India. It is labelled as '*Oberonia ritaiana* King & Pantling' in Robert Pantling's handwriting. But, it was never validly published. On critical examination it is found that the specimen marked as *O. ritaiana* is much different from *O. ritaii* King & Pantling.

The species named as *O. ritaiana* and left unpublished by King and Pantling is related to *O. myriantha* Lindl. and is described here as a new species viz., *O. raoii*. As the name *O. ritaiana* proposed by King & Pantling may bring ambiguity, is not accepted here (Art 53.4, ICBN, Greuter et al., 1994).

L.R. Shakya and R.P. Chaudhary

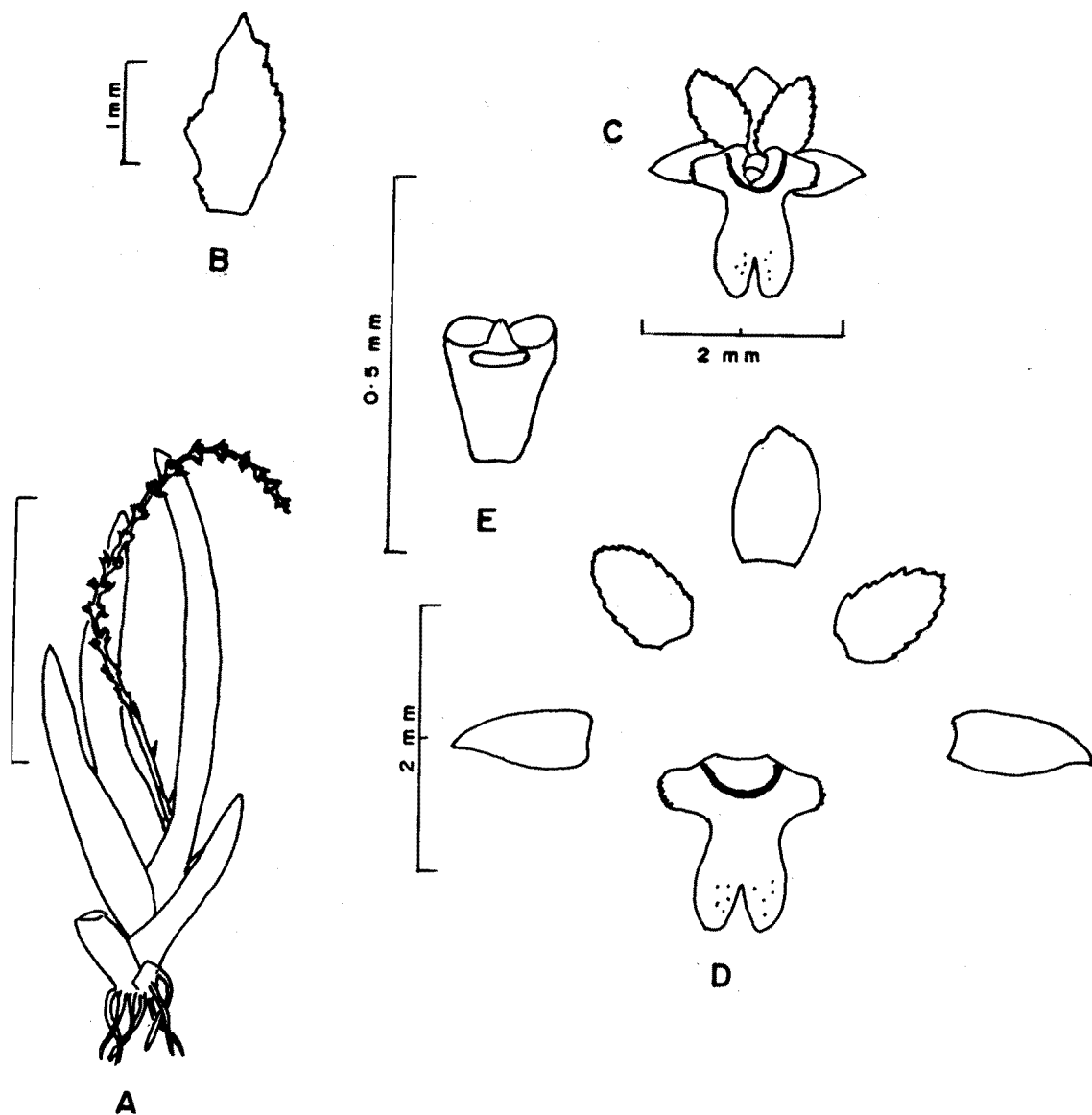


Fig. 1. *Oberonia raoii* L.R. Shakya et R.P. Chaudhary. A. Habit; B. Bract; C. Flower, D. Outer three sepals, inner two petals and the lip spread out; E. Column (All from Pantling 449798).

A new species of *Oberonia*

Oberonia raoii L.R. Shakya et R.P. Chaudhary, *sp. nov.* (Fig. 1).

Oberonia myriantha Lindl. affinis, sed differt habitus parvus, petalis ovatis, fimbriatis, labello nullinervis, laterio labello lobo quadranto cum minusculo erosus polus spicalis.

Type: India, Meghalaya, Khasia Hills, Nongpoh, alt. 4000 ft. (1219 m), August 1897, *Pantling 449798* (Holo-CAL).

Acaulescent caespitose, epiphytic herbs. Leaves 5, 1.5-8.2 x 0.4-0.5 cm, distichous, equitant, linear, acute, subfalcate, basal ones smaller. Scape *ca.* 4.5 cm long, 0.5 mm broad, with few sterile bracts below inflorescence, not adnate to the terminal leaf. Inflorescence *ca.* 5 cm long, longer than longest leaf, slightly decurved; rachis not fleshy, ribbed; flower-vericels 1.5-2 mm apart, each 4-6-flowered. Flowers bracteate, subsessile, *ca.* 2.2 mm across. Bracts *ca.* 2 x 1 mm, slightly longer than pedicel and ovary, lanceolate, margin irregularly fimbriate. Dorsal sepal *ca.* 1 x 1.7 mm, oblong, obtuse, entire; lateral sepals *ca.* 1.0 x 0.5 mm, induplicate, oblong, acute, entire. Petals *ca.* 0.75 x 0.6 mm, spreading, ovate, subacute to obtuse, margin finely serrate. Lips *ca.* 1.25 x 1 mm, 3-lobed, lateral lobes quadrate, *ca.* 0.3 mm broad, laterally spreading, apical margin finely erose; terminal lobe divided into two blunt lobes, each lobule *ca.* 0.4 mm long, apex obtuse or truncate, gland-dotted, entire. Column *ca.* 0.25 mm long, cylindrical, without lateral appendages; clinandrium *ca.* 0.2 mm across, apical, clinandrial wing distinct, membranous, uniformly surrounding the clinandrium; rostellum minute, attached to the clinandrial wing; pollinia 4, *ca.* 0.15 mm long, obovoid.

Flowering: August.

Etymology: The specific epithet of the new taxon is in honour of Dr. R.R. Rao, Senior Scientist, National Botanical Research Institute, India and ex-Deputy Director, Botanical Survey of India, Eastern Circle, Shillong, India.

Oberonia raoii is related to *O. myriantha* Lindl. from which it can easily be distinguished by its finely serrate petals against entire petals, veinless lip with quadrate lateral lobes with finely erose apical margins in contrast to 3-veined lip with forward-pointing oblong, entire lateral lobes.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Dr. P.K. Hajra, Director, Botanical Survey of India, for providing facilities to work at CAL. We thank the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (RONAST) for financial support, and Dr. Al-Shehbaz for editorial help.

L.R. Shakya and R.P. Chaudhary**Literature Cited**

- Ansari, R. & N.P. Balakrishnan. 1990. A Revision of the Indian species of *Oberonia* (Orchidaceae). *Orchid Monographs* 4: 1-82.
- Greuter, W., F.R. Barrie, H.M. Burdet, W.G. Chaloner, V. Demoulin, D.L. Hawksworth, P.M. Jorgensen, D.H. Nicolson, P.C. Silva, P. Trehane & J. Mc Neill. 1994. *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature (Tokyo Code)*. Regnum Veg. 131.
- King, G. & R. Pantling. 1897. Some new Indo-Malayan Orchids. *J. As. Soc. Bengal* 66: 578-605.
- Sathish Kumar, C. & K.S. Manilal. 1994. *A Catalogue of Indian Orchids*. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehra Dun.
- Seidenfaden, G. 1968. The genus *Oberonia* in Mainland Asia. *Dansk. Bot. Ark.* 25: 1-125.