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CYATHOPUS SIKKIMENSIS STAPF (POACEAE) IN NORTH WEST HIMALAYA

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Cyathopus Stapf is a monotypic genus and is represented by *C. sikkimensis* Stapf. It is closely allied to *Garnotia* Brongn. but differes in having awnless, entire lemma and beaked glumes. Before Stapf established this genus, Kuntz had identified it as *Milium treutleri* O. Ktze., while Munro had opined it to be a new genus allied to *Hymenachne* P. Beauv.

Cyathopus sikkimensis Stapf had been collected only twice after its type, first in 1943 and later in 1992 from Sikkim (Bor, 1960; Singh. 1994). A subsequent perusal of the relevant literature revealed that the genus is rare and endemic to Sikkim (India) and eastern Bhutan region of Eastern Himalaya (Hooker, 1896; Bor, 1960; Karthikeyan, 1983, 1998; Singh *& al.* 1997; Nayar, 1996). During exploration in Kumaon Himalaya the senior author collected this species from Munsyari in Pithoragarh District, which forms a new record for North-West Himalaya. A brief account including nomenclature, description, phenology, ecology and distribution with illustration of the grass is provided below. (Fig, 1, Plate-2)

Cyathopus sikkimensis Stapf in Hook., Ic. Pl. 4 t. 2395. 1895; Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India 7: 240. 1896; Bor. Grasses, Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan 565. 1960: Vedprakash & S.K. Jain: Fasc. Fl. India 3: 2. 1979; P. Singh in J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc. 91: 352-354. 1994; Naltic, Fl. Bhutan 3(1).

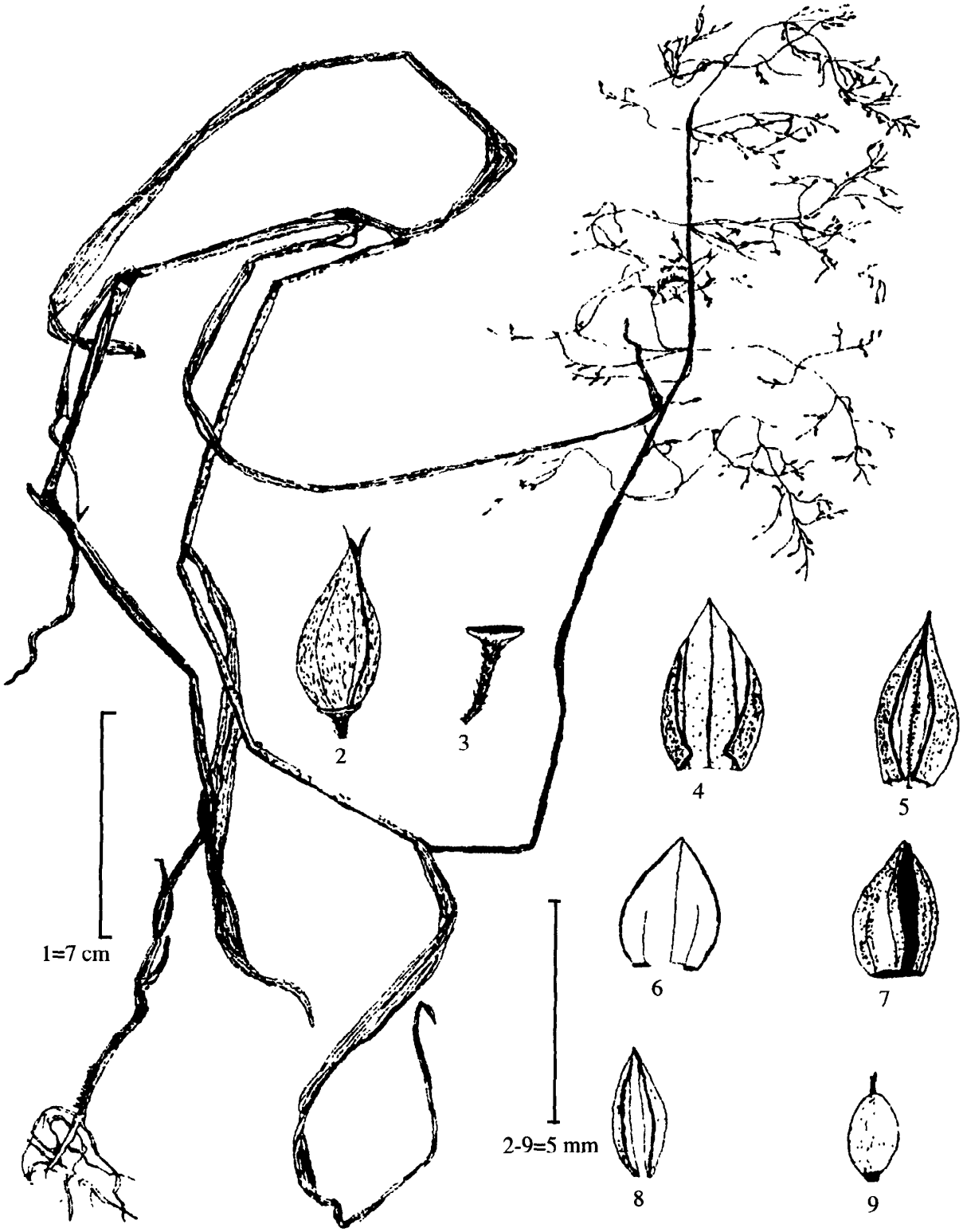
Tufted perennial, Culms, 80-100 cm high, terete, glabrous. Leaf sheath striate, glabrous; leaf blades 0.4-0.8 × 14-20 cm, flat, linear, lanceolate, acuminate, glabrous. Ligule elongate, *ca* 5 mm long, membranous. Inflorescence an erect open panicle, 20-30 × 5-7 cm; branches 3-8(15) cm long, whorled, divided above the naked base. Spikelet, 1-flowered, 2-2.5(2.8) mm long, terete, awnless, without rhachilla extension, deciduous, solitary, scaberulous, articulated on the cupular tip of the pedicel. Pedicel 3-4mm long, scabrid. Glumes 2, equal, 2-2.5 mm long, slightly exceeding the floret, lanceolate, beaked, strongly 3-nerved, scabrid on nerves. Lemma 1.5-2.0 (2.5) mm long, slightly shorter and broader than glumes, awnless, smooth. Palea 1.5-2 mm long, narrow, acute, 2-nerved, smooth. Ovary glabrous, Caryopsis 1.5-2 mm long, ovate-elliptic.

Flowering & Fruiting: September-December.

Ecology : A rare grass growing under dense forest in moist conditions on slopes along with the species of *Agrostis, Setaria,* etc. The locality remains snow covered for 3-4 months of the year.

Distribution : India : Sikkim & Uttaranchal; Bhutan.

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Figs. 1–9 *Cyathopus sikkimensis* Stapf

1. Habit; 2. Spikelet; 3. Pedicel; 4. Lower glume; 5. Upper glume; 6. Lemma (Dorsal view); 7. Lemma (Lateral view); 8. Palea; 9. Caryopsis.



Plate. 2. *Cyathopus sikkimensis* Stapf - Close-up of Inflorescence

Note : The plant resembles *Millium* L. is morphological appearence but differes in having terete, deciduous, small sized spikelets and glumed beaked and falling with spikelet.

Specimens examined : India : Uttaranchal, district Pithoragarh, Munsyari: ±2375m, 16.09.2003, *Manish K. Kandwal,* 126 (BSD); Sikkim, above 6000 ft. (±1829m), Nov.-Dec. 1943, *Bor's collector* 330 (DD).

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