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A NEW VARIETY OF *CHEIROSTYLIS CHINENSIS* ROLFE VAR. *GLABRA* (ORCHIDACEAE) FROM DIBANG VALLEY, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

M. BHAUMIK AND M. K. PATHAK*
Botanical Survey of India, Shillong-793 003

The genus *Cheirostylis* Bl., presently comprising of about 25 species, is distributed in S.E. Africa, S.E. Asia, Japan, Philippines to New Guinea (Pierce & Cribb 2002). In India this genus is represented by 9 species of which 6 are found in Arunachal Pradesh (Chowdhery 1998). In course of our plant exploration tour in Dibang Valley district of Arunachal Pradesh, we have come across a species of *Cheirostylis* Bl. After critical examination of specimens and literature, it came close to *C. chinensis* Rolfe with some distinct variation. So a new variety is described and illustrated here.

Cheirostylis chinensis Rolfe var. **glabra** M. Bhaumik & M.K. Pathak *var. nov.*

Cheirostylis chinensis Rolfe var. *glabra var. nov.* a varietate chinensi differt ovario glabro, bracteisque floralibus glabris, petalis acuminatis non obtusis, et maculis duabus latis viridibus ad basin epichilis.

Typus: India, Arunachal Pradesh, Dibang Valley district, Bejari, 150m, 5.3.2004, *Bhaumik & Tham* 104752A (Holo., CAL), 104752 B-C (Iso., ASSAM).

Chierostylis chinensis Rolfe var. *glabra* differs from *Chierostylis chinensis* Rolfe var. *chinensis* in having glabrous ovary and bracts, acuminate petals and 2 broad green patches at the base of the epichile.

Cheirostylis chinensis Rolfe var. **glabra** M. Bhaumik & M.K. Pathank *var. nov.* (Fig. 1)

Epiphytic herbs to 18 cm long. Stems slender, moliniform to 9 cm long, fibrous, rooting at internodes beneath. Leaves 3-8, simple, alternate, 11-20 × 6.5-11 mm, ovate-acuminate, entire, glabrous, bluish green; petiole 2-6 mm long, sheathing, tubular at base. Scape slender to 9 cm long, white ciliate; sterile bracts 2-3, 5.2-6 × 1-1.5 mm, tubular at base, acuminate, pinkish brown, spotted. Inflorescence 2-6-flowered raceme, peduncle 0.8-2 cm, terete, sparsely white ciliate. Floral bracts broadly ovate-acuminate, 6.5-7 × 3.8-4 mm, keeled, brownish-dotted, glabrous. Sepaline tube unequally 3-lobed, 3.8-4 × 2-2.2 mm, greenish; dorsal lobes 2.5-3 mm long, margins hyaline; lateral lobes equal, 1.2-2 mm, recurved, 1-nerved, brownish-spotted. Petals falcate, 4.2-5 × 1-1.2 mm, acuminate, glabrous, membranous, greenish white; lip 7.5-8 × 7-7.5 mm, hypochile narrowly saccate, margins incurved with 1-2 pairs of setae along nerves on each side, mesochile narrow; epichile broadly ovate, divided into 2 halves, margins lacerate with 6 irregular lobes on each side, epichile with 2 broad green patches at base; column 1.5-2 × 1.2-1.8 mm, greenish towards base. Stamen 1, filament *ca*-0.5mm long; anther 2-lobed; each lobe *ca* 2 × 0.5 mm long, viscidium *ca* 1 mm long; pollinia *ca* 1.5 mm long, caudicle *ca* 1 mm long; rosteller arm *ca* 1 × 1.5 mm, upper part of rostellum lanceolate, lobes 0.5-1 mm long. Ovary clavate, 5.5-7 × 2-2.2 mm, greenish, glabrous.

*Botainical Survey of India, Indian Boatanic Garden, Howrah-711103.
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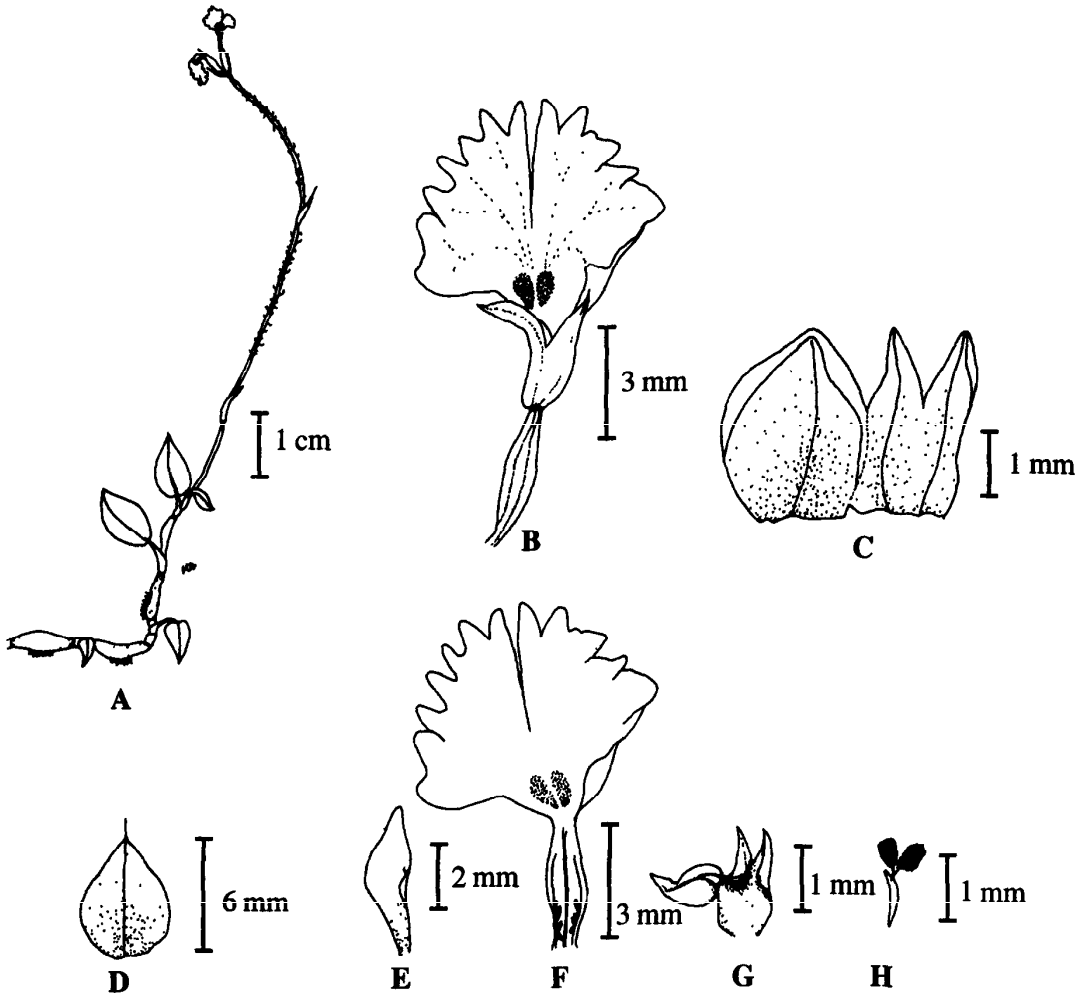


Fig. 1 : *Cheirostylis chinesis* Rolfe var. *glabra* Bhaumik & Pathak: A. Habit; B. A Flower; C. Sepaline tube spread out; D. Floral bract; E. Petals; F. Lip; G. Staminal column showing anther lobe; H. Pollinarium.

Type : India, Arunachal Pradesh, Dibang Valley district, Bejari, 150 m, 5.3.2004, *Bhaumik & Tham*-104752A (Holo., CAL), 104752 B-C (Iso., ASSAM).

Flowering & Fruiting : February March.

Habitat : Epiphytic on *Asplenium nidus* L. rhizomes in moist subtropical forests about 150 m altitude.

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