# *CLEISOSTOMA URAIENSIS* (HAYATA) GARAY & SWEET (ORCHIDACEAE) IN THE NICOBAR ISLANDS, INDIA

Thothathri *et al.* (1973) recorded *Cleisostoma striolatum* (Reichenb. *f.*) Garay for India from the Great Nicobar Island. Their specimen (*Thothathri* 11346) matches well with that of *Elmer* 9244, a replicate specimen available at CAL, collected from Luzon (the Philippines). Both these specimens are in fruiting condition. *Elmer* 9244 was 'tentatively referred' to as *Sarcanthus striolatus* Reichenb. *f.* but was later annotated by Ames (1915) as 'appears to belong to' his *Sarcanthus micranthus*. *Sarcanthus striolatus* is an obscure species, the type specimen reported to have reached Reichenbach through Low from the Philippines. Merrill (1925) states that "no specimen certainly referable to it have been seen"

Further collections of specimens similar to *Thothathri* 11346 from the Great Nicobar Island were studied by the author including a few in flowering condition. These were identified as *Sarcanthus micranthus* Ames, a species synonymous to *Cleisostoma uraiensis*, hitherto known from the Philippines and the Ryukyus. Hence this species is recorded here for the first time from the Nicobar Islands for India.

**Cleisostoma uraiensis** (Hayata) Garay & Sweet, Orch. S. Ryukyu Isl. 156. 1974 ; Liu & Su in Fl. Taiwan 5 : 928, pl. 1565. 1978. *Sarcanthus uraiensis* Hayata, Icon. Pl. Form. 8 : 130, f. 58. 1919. *Sarcanthus micranthus* Ames, Orch. 5 : 248. 1915 ; Merrill, Enum. Philip. Fl. Pl. 1 : 437. 1925. *Cleisostoma striolatum non* (Reichenb. *f.*) Garay ; sensu Thothathri *et al.* in Bull. Bot. Surv. Ind. 15 : 257. 1973 (1976).

Epiphytes. *Stems* pendulous, leafy throughout, 25-40 cm long ; internodes ± 3 cm long, apical few flat, enclosed by slightly winged, striate leaf sheaths. *Leaves* jointed, distichous, linear, apex unequally bilobed, lobes obtuse, 10-25 cm long, 1.2-2 cm wide. *Inflorescence*, paniculate, opposite to leaves, 15-23 cm long ; *peduncle* ± 10 cm long with 2-3 sterile sheathing, acute bracts of ± 3 mm long ; flowering bracts scaly, ± 1 mm long, acute. *Flowers* greenish-yellow or pale green. *Sepals* similar, oblong, concave, narrowly keeled on back, obtuse and slightly hooded at apex, ± 3 mm long, 1.2-1.5 mm wide. *Petals* spathulate-lanceolate, obtuse at apex, 1.5-2 mm long, ± 1 mm wide. *Lip* 3-lobed, spurred, lateral lobes falcate-triangular, erect, acute, ± 1 mm long ; midlobe fleshy, semi-orbicular, obtuse, ± 1 mm long, with 2 fleshy calli on ventral surface and a white callus at the base near the entrance to spur ; spar oblong, ± 1.5 mm long, septate, with a thin, retuse appendage, forming a pouch on the back wall. *Column* short. *Pollinia* 4 in two pairs, globose. *Capsule* obovate, ribbed, ± 1 cm long, ± 0.5 cm thick.

*Specimens examined* : INDIA : N. Nicobars : Katchal Isl., *P. Chakraborty* 5320 (PBL). S. Nicobars : Great Nicobar Isl., *Balakrishnan* 2937, 3869 (PBL) ; *D. K. Hore* 7721 (PBL) ; *Thothathri* 11346 (CAL ! ; PBL). PHILLIPPINES : Luzon, *Elmer* 9244 (CAL !) ; *Ibid. Merrill* 1918 (CAL !).

*Distribution* : Nicobar Islands, Philippines and Ryukyu Islands.

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