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ERIA CONNATA JOSEPH, HEGDE ET ABBAREDDY—A NEW SPECIES OF ORCHID FROM KAMENG DISTRICT, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

J. JOSEPH, S. N. HEGDE* AND N. R. ABBAREDDY

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ABSTRACT

During recent intensive collections in forests of Kameng district the authors gathered many specimens of an *Eria* resembling *Eria pumila* Lindl., epiphytic on large trees that had been felled. A critical comparative study of many fresh specimens of both, and other ones, as also concerned literature (*see* Reference) has proved this to be a distinct new species. This new species should also be found in the moist subtropical dense forests of neighbouring districts as well, on further search.

Eria connata Joseph, Hegde et Abbareddy, sp. nov. quamis *E. pumila* Lindl. sit simillima, facillime tamen distingui postest ob rhizomae repentis absentium nec non et ob praesentiam menti tubularis, ovario subaequalis connatoque sepalo laterali formati. Labelli lobi laterales neque lanceolati neque acuminati sed admodum angusti sunt; pollinia denique sunt pedicellata.

Holotypus N. R. Abbareddy 62391 A (CAL); *Isotypi N. R. Abbareddy* 62391 B-C (ASSAM), 62391 D (MH), 7-8-1980, lecti ad locum Sessa (alti *ca* 1099 m), Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh; *Paratypi S. N. Hegde* 4045 (ASSAM), 22-7-1980, lecti ad locum Kalaktang (alti *ca* 1200 m), Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh; *S. N. Hegde* 3168-2 (Orchid Herbarium, Tipi), lecti ad locum Khellong (alti *ca* 1500 m), Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh.

Eria connata Joseph, Hegde et Abbareddy, sp. nov. is allied to *E. pumila* Lindl. but can easily be distinguished by the absence of creeping rhizome; by the presence of tubular mentum formed by the connate lateral sepals, subequal to the ovary; lateral lobes of the lip being very narrow instead of lanceolate acuminate; and pollinia being long stalked.

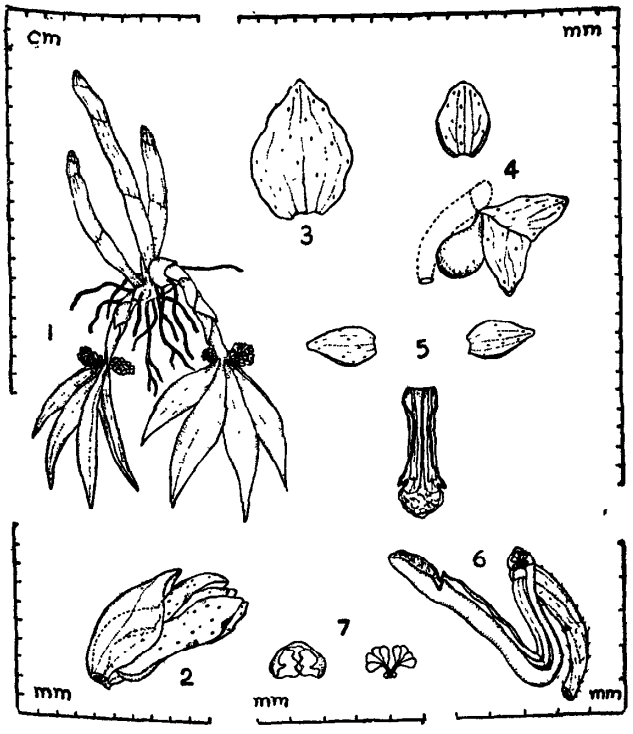
Holotype N. R. Abbareddy 62391 A (CAL); *Isotypes N. R. Abbareddy* 62391 B-C (ASSAM), 62391 D (MH), 7-8-1980; Sessa (alt. *ca* 1100); *Paratypes S. N. Hegde* 4045 (ASSAM), 22-7-1980, Kalaktang (alt. *ca* 1200 m); *S. N. Hegde* 3168-2 (Orchid Herbarium, Tipi), Khellong (alt. *ca* 1500 m), all in Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh.

The union of the lateral sepals more than half way along the lower margins forming a long tubular mentum sub-equalling the ovary, the narrow obscure side lobes of the lip and the long stalked pollinia at once separate it from other species of *Eria*, making it quite distinctive.

Caespitose, erect, pseudobulbous epiphytes, with many thin wiry roots and fresh arcuate or pendulous leafy flowering shoots. *Old Pseudobulbs* 5 - 15 × 0.7 - 1.0 cm, leafless, subcylindric, slightly compressed, subclavate, erect, green, obliquely noded, with progressively shorter internodes telescoping at tip, bereft of persisting sheath fibres and

*Present address : Orchidologist, Orchid Station, Tipi, Arunachal Pradesh, India.
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persisting for more than one season. *Fresh shoots* arising from the base of the old pseudobulbs, slender, pendulous (or arcuate) with about 4-6 sheathing scales at the lower nodes and leaves at the apex; after anthesis axis of the fresh shoot slowly becomes erect and swells into a pseudobulbous stem. *Leaves* 6-8 × 1.0-1.7 cm, 4 (-5), sessile, terminal, narrowly elliptic, subfalcate towards the apex, acuminate, distichous, bifarious, distinctly 5- or 7-nerved, deciduous. *Inflorescence* racemose heads, one or two, axillary or leaf opposed, subsessile, dense, globose or subglobose, proteranthus. *Flowers* many, crowded, bracteate, shortly pedicillate and slightly arcuate, not widely



Eria connata Joseph, Hegde et Abbareddy, sp. nov. Figs. 1-7 : 1. Plant. 2. Flower. 3. Bract. 4. Dorsal sepals and Lateral sepals. 5. Lateral petals and Lip. 6. Ovary, Column, Foot and Lip. 7. Another cap and Pollinia. (*N. R. Abbareddy* 62391 A, CAL)

opening, fragrant, white with yellow lips. *Bracts* 6.0-7.5 × 5.0-6.5 mm, unequal, lowest the largest, broadly ovate, acute or suborbicular, obtuse, much longer than the ovary, erect, concave, concealing the ovary, 5-nerved, gland dotted. *Pedicel with ovary* 5-6 × *ca* 1 mm, densely pubescent, arcuate. *Perianth* unequal, gland dotted, 3-nerved; sepals sparsely obscurely papillose without. *Dorsal sepal* 3.5-4.0 × 2.5-3.0 mm, ovate, obtuse, hooded over the column. *Lateral sepals* 7-8 × 2.0-2.5 mm, obliquely oblong-lanceolate, obtuse, thickened at apex externally, attached to the lateral sides of the foot of the column and connate along the lower margins up to the middle forming a long (almost equalling the ovary) tubular mentum, with scrotiform tip and closely enveloping the lip. *Lateral petals* 3-4 × 1.5-2.0 mm, much narrower and a little shorter than the sepals, ovate-lanceolate, blunt at tip, thin. *Lip* 6.0-6.5 × 2.0-2.5 mm, narrowly oblanceolate, 3-lobed, longer than the dorsal sepal and petals, but shorter than the lateral sepals included, straight, cymbiform, shallowly saccate at the very base, sparsely gland dotted, attached to the tip of the long foot, longitudinally 3-ridged; lateral ridges much broader and thicker and not continuous with the midlobe; median ridge very narrow, dilated at the apex and joins with the thickened midlobe; sidelobes 4.5-5.0 mm long, erect, narrow, involute at the margins; midlobe 1.5-2.0 × *ca* 2.0 mm, orbicular, fleshy, flat convex, warted adaxially, golden yellow. *Column ca* 2 mm long, short, stout, erect, with a long foot; foot 3.5-4.5 mm long, broader, parallel to and subequal with the ovary, dilated and slightly incurved at the tip, prominently 3-ridged within; anther *ca* 1.0 × 1.5 mm, terminal, 2-celled; pollinia yellow, 8 in two groups of four each, pyriform, long-stalked with a common obscure disc. *Capsules ca* 11 × 3 mm, shortly pedicelled, densely pubescent, 6-ridged, green.

Flowering: July-August; Fruiting: Late August-September. Epiphyte on main trunks of trees in evergreen sub-tropical rain forests, at 1100-1500 m altitude.

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