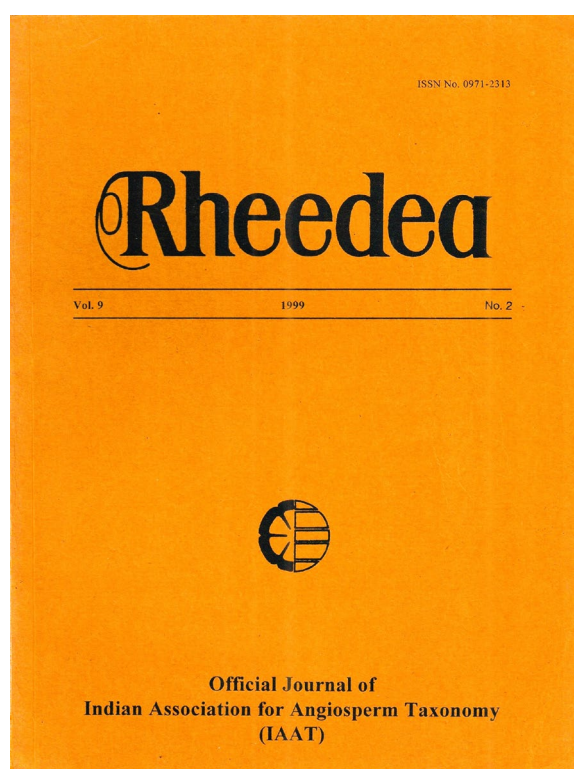




## *Oberonia josephii* Saldanha (Orchidaceae) - A new record for Kerala

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## ***Oberonia josephii* Saldanha (Orchidaceae) - a new record for Kerala**

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### **Abstract**

*Oberonia josephii* Saldanha, an epiphytic orchid originally reported from Karnataka is reported for the first time from Kerala. A brief description and an illustration are provided.

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Oberonia josephii* Saldanha was proposed by Saldanha based on a collection from Hassan District, Karnataka. A recent revisionary study of the genus *Oberonia* Lindl. (Ansari & Balakrishnan, 1990), reveals that this species is restricted to the type locality. However, during the course of taxonomic investigations on the epiphytic flora of Western Ghats, the authors could collect the species from Wayanad District. A brief description and an illustrations are provided for its easy identification.

***Oberonia josephii* Saldanha** Ind. For. 100: 568, 1974; Saldanha & Nicolson, Fl. Hassan Dist. 1976; 840p. Ansari & Balakrishnan, Orch. Monogr. 4: 14. 1990.

Pendulous epiphytic herbs. Leaves 10-16 x 0.6-1.4 cm. ensiform, flattened, acute; scape upto 10 cm long, slightly winged. Inflorescence a many flowered spike with a sterile portion at the apex, floral bracts 4.5 x 2 mm, ovate, fimbriate; flowers 6-6.5 x 3.5-4 mm, orange, in distinct verticels; floral bracts 4.5 x 2 mm, ovate, fimbriate; sepals and petals deflexed; sepals dissimilar, dorsal sepal 2-2.2 x 0.75-0.8 mm, ovate, induplicate; lateral sepals 2-2.2 x 0.75-0.8 mm, ovate, slightly serrate at apex, acute; petals 2-2.2 x 0.3 mm, lanceolate, base slightly serrate, apex acute, crossing each other; lip 4.5 x 3.5 mm, 3-lobbed, sparsely gland dotted, lateral lobes oblong, elongate, folded upwards and encircling the column, midlobe, 2-lobuled, lobules orbicular, crenulate, serrulate; disc ovate, saccate; pollinia 4, 0.3-0.4 mm long.

**Ecology** : Epiphytic on branches of isolated trees in the evergreen forests between 1000 - 1100 m altitude, associated with *Eria* sp.

**Specimens examined** : Vengavalumala, Thirunelly, Wayanad (Dt.) 1100 m. *Stephen & Michael* 008115 (KFRI).

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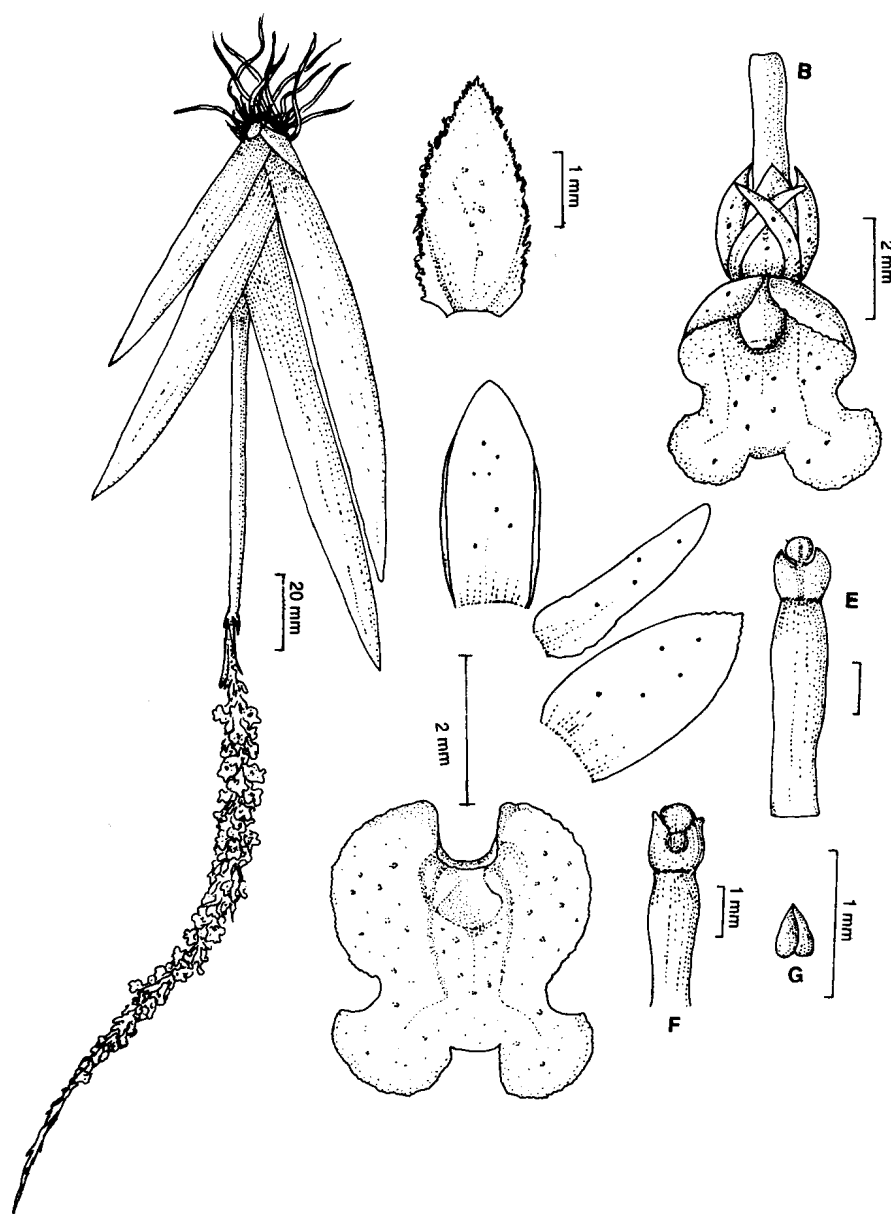


Fig. 1 *Oberonia josephii* Saldanha. A. Habit, B. Flower, C. Bract, D. Floral parts, E. Column dorsal side, F. Column ventral side, G. Pollinia.

***Oberonia josephii***

*Note* : Hitherto known only from Hassan District of Karnataka and hence a new record to Kerala. In the specimens collected the petals are found crossing each other as given in the Saldanha's original description. However, Ansari & Balakrishnan (1990) maintain that the petals of this species do not always arch backwards and cross each other.

**Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to the Director, KFRI, for encouragement and facilities and Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Kerala Forest Department for financial support. Thanks are also due to Mr. V.B. Sajeev for line drawings.

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