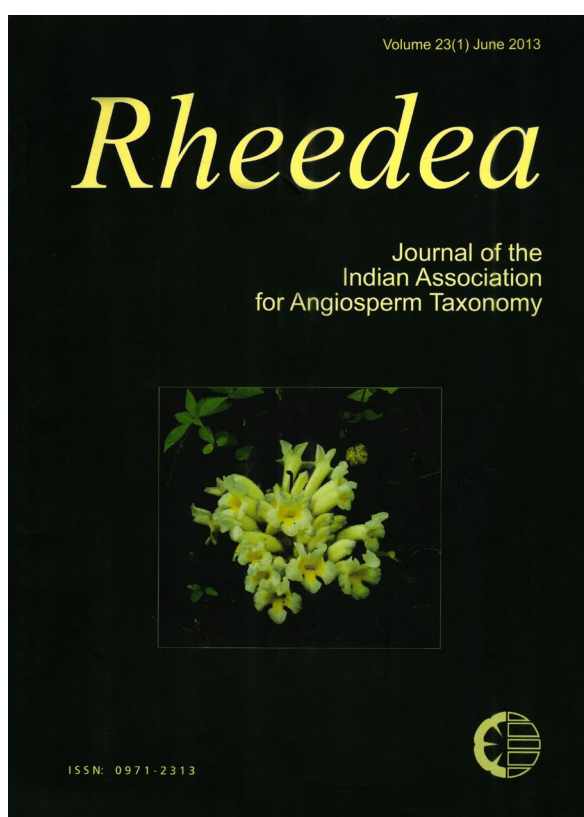




## *Solanum diphyllum* (Solanaceae) – A new record for Southern India

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How to cite:

**Reema Kumari M. 2013.** *Solanum diphyllum* (Solanaceae) – A new record for Southern India. *Rheedeia* 23(1): 50-51.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.22244/rheedeia.2013.23.01.14>

Received: 11.03.2013

Revised and accepted: 08.06.2013

Published in print: 30.06.2013

Published Online: 30.06.2013



## *Solanum diphyllum* (Solanaceae) – A new record for Southern India

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### Abstract

*Solanum diphyllum* L., a tropical American species, is added here to the flora of Southern India from Bangalore, Karnataka. Its occurrence in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu is discussed. A detailed description and photograph of the species are provided for easy identification.

**Keywords:** *Solanum diphyllum*, Solanaceae, New Record, Southern India

### Introduction

*Solanum* L., a subcosmopolitan genus, with 1250 species is distributed mostly in tropical and subtropical regions of the world, especially in Americas (Mabberley, 2008). In India, the genus is represented by 48 species (Reema Kumari, 2004). Earlier, while revising the Indian Solanaceae, specimens of a *Solanum* sp. were collected from two different localities in Pune, Maharashtra and determined as *S. diphyllum* L. after seeing the type and comparing with authentic specimens (Reema Kumari, 2004). More recently, specimens were also been collected in Bangalore, Karnataka.

*Solanum diphyllum*, native to tropical America (Zhang *et al.*, 1994), was reported for India from West Bengal (Das *et al.*, 1997; Paul & Biswas, 1995). The present collections from Pune in Maharashtra and Bangalore in Karnataka form a new report for these states as well as for the entire southern India. A detailed description, phenology, photograph and relevant notes are provided here to facilitate easy identification.

***Solanum diphyllum* L.**, Sp. Pl. 184. 1753; D'Arcy, Ann. Missouri Bot. Gard. 61: 845. 1974; Zhi Y. Zhang *et al.* in C.Y. Wu & P.H. Raven, Fl. China 17: 317. 1994; M. Das *et al.*, J. Econ. Taxon. Bot. 21: 158. 1997; T.K. Paul & M.C. Biswas, Bull. Bot. Surv. India 37: 137. 2000. – Type: Herb. Linn. 248.5 (LINN, MH microfiche !) (vide D'Arcy, l.c.) **Fig. 1**

Shrub, to 3 m high, minutely pubescent throughout. Stem terete, green to brown; internodes to 8 cm long. Leaves 2 at each node, unequal, elliptic, oblong-elliptic or linear-obovate, acute or decurrent

into petiole, entire at margins, acute or obtuse at apex, 1–10 × 0.5–4 cm; lateral nerves 4–7 on either side, faintly minute-hairy; petioles to 5 mm long. Inflorescence a racemose fascicle, c. 10-flowered; peduncles to 7 mm long. Calyx cupular, 1.5–2 × 2–2.5 mm, minutely pubescent, 5-lobed; lobes broadly triangular, acute, c. 0.5 × 0.8 mm, hirsute; pedicels to 1 cm long. Corolla stellate, 5–8 mm across, creamy white, 5-lobed; lobes equal, elliptic or linear-ovate, acute, 4–5 × 2.5–3 mm, incurved, hyaline; tube 1–2 mm long. Stamens 5, equal, epipetalous, introrse; filaments c. 1 mm long, flat; anthers oblong, c. 2 × 1 mm, basifixed, yellow, initially dehiscent poricidally, later longitudinally. Ovary globose, c. 1 mm long; style 4–5 mm long. Berries globose, slightly constricted in middle, 7–12 mm diameter, glabrous, yellow or reddish yellow; seeds reniform or discoid, c. 3 × 2 mm, thickened at margins, yellow or tan.

*Flowering & Fruiting:* March – September.

*Distribution:* Native to Mexico and Central America. Widely cultivated as an ornamental plant for its beautiful bright yellow or reddish yellow globose berries in subtropical and tropical parts of the world. Cultivated and naturalized in India (Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal).

*Notes:* Three populations of *S. diphyllum* were found to occur at Malleswaram, Bangalore, two along Sankey tank road and one at the Maramma Circle. Each population had c. 5 individuals all growing under the shade of *Ficus religiosa* tree. It is reported to occur at Adyar, Chennai (Dr. K. Karthigeyan,



Fig. 1. *Solanum diphyllum* L.: a. Habit; b. Flowering twig; c. Fruiting twig.

pers. comm.). This species is represented by a few specimens only in Indian herbaria. The present collection has been deposited at Department of Botany, Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni College for Women, Bangalore.

*Specimens examined:* INDIA, **Maharashtra**, Pune Distr., BSI campus, 13.8.2002, M. Reema Kumari 107888; Gymkhana, MACS campus, 14.8.2002, M. Reema Kumari 107889. **West Bengal**, Howrah, Bot. Gard., 4.3.2002, M. Reema Kumari 107858 (MH). **Karnataka**, Bangalore, Malleswaram, Marramma circle, 31.5.2012, M. Reema Kumari 4321; Sankey tank, 1.6.2012, M. Reema Kumari 4325; Bellary road, Mekri circle, near Honda showroom, 6.6.2012, M. Reema Kumari 4361 (MLACW).

## Acknowledgement

The author is thankful to the Head, Department of Botany, Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni College for Women, Bangalore, for encouragements and support.

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Received: 11.03.2013

Revised and Accepted: 08.06.2013