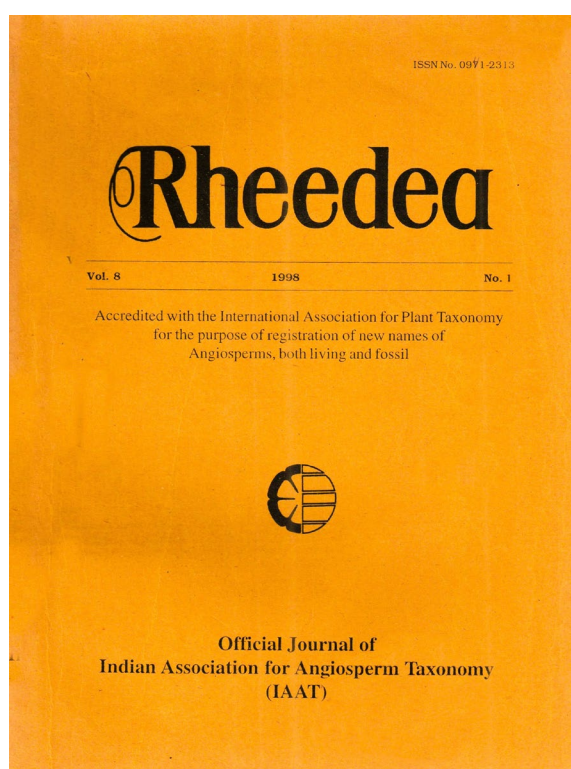




A New species of *Euphorbia* L. (Euphorbiaceae) from Southern India

Binojkumar M.S. & R. Gopalan



How to cite:

Binojkumar M.S. & R. Gopalan. 1998. A New species of *Euphorbia* L. (Euphorbiaceae) from Southern India. *Rheedeia* 8(1): 67–70.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.22244/rheedeia.1998.08.01.02>

Published in print: 30.06.1998

Published Online: 01.01.2022

A New species of *Euphorbia* L. (Euphorbiaceae) from Southern India

M.S. Binojkumar¹ and R. Gopalan
Botanical Survey of India, Southern Circle,
Coimbatore - 641 003, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

A new species, viz., *Euphorbia balakrishnanii* (Euphorbiaceae) is described and illustrated.

Euphorbia balakrishnanii Binojk. & Gopalan, *sp. nov.* (Fig. 1).

Euphorbia corrigioloides Boiss. affinis, caulibus curtioribus, multo effusis; caudicibus infirmis; foliis elliptico-oblongis vel suborbicularibus, obtuse serratis, paginis superis ad medianum irregulariter maculatis; cyathiis axillaribus, solitariis vel aliquot fasciculatis; carinis capsulae acutis, ciliatis, seminibus oblongis differt.

Typus: India, Tamil Nadu, Tirunelveli, Marshy areas of scrub forests in Vallanad R.F., 25 Feb. 1990. *Binojkumar 85092* (Holotype - CAL; Isotype - MH).

Prostrate or decumbent herbs; rootstock weak; stems many from a slender rootstock, filiform, 10-28 cm long, pale red; nodes slightly thickened; internodes 1-1.5 cm long, glabrous. Leaves simple, opposite; stipules broad, triangular, lacinate, ca 1 mm long; petioles ca 3 mm long, glabrous or sparsely pubescent; lamina elliptic-oblong to suborbicular, 5-10 x 4-6 mm, oblique at base, bluntly serrate at margins towards upper portion, acute to subapiculate at apex, with an irregular purple patch at the centre on adaxial surface. Cyathia axillary, solitary or 2-3 together; peduncles ca 2 mm long, glabrous; involucre turbinate, ca 1.5 mm across, sparsely puberulous; lobes 5, oblong, deeply lacinate; glands 4, orbicular; limbs of glands suborbicular, minutely wavy along margins towards apex, ca 1 mm across, white or pale pink. *Male florets*: 8-12 in each cyathium; bracteoles filiform, ca 1.5 mm long; pedicels ca 1 mm long; anthers subglobose, transversely dehiscent. *Female flowers*: gynophore ca 3 mm long, glabrous; ovary ca 1 mm across, sparsely hairy; styles 3, ca 1 mm long, each bifid at apex; stigma capitate. Capsules ovoid, ca 1.5 (-1.7) x 1.5 (-1.7) mm, keeled, ciliate along keels. Seeds oblong, ca 1 x 0.75 mm, smooth, grey.

¹ Present address: Dept. of Postgraduate Studies in Botany, S.D. College, Alappuzha - 688 003, Kerala.

M.S. Binojkumar and R. Gopalan

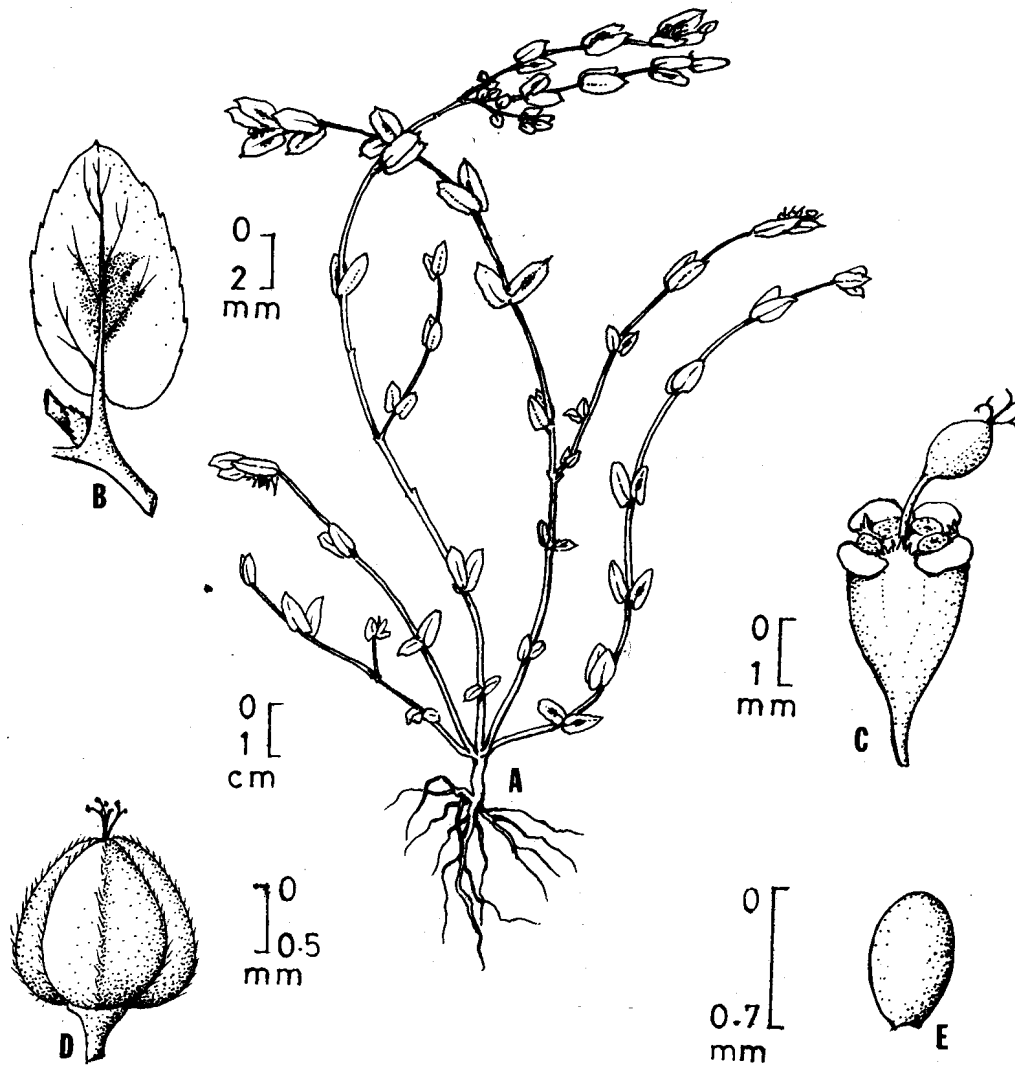


Fig. 1. *Euphorbia balakrishnanii* Binojk. & Gopalan. A. Habit; B. Nodal region showing stipule; C. Cyathium; D. Capsule; E. Seed.

A new species of Euphorbia

Allied to *E. corrigioloides* Boiss. by many in axillary cymes, spreading from rootstock; elliptic-oblong or suborbicular and bluntly serrate leaves with patches at centre on upper surfaces; in axillary, solitary or a few cluster keeled capsules with ciliate-hairy keels and oblong seeds. Comparison of *E. balakrishanii* and *E. corrigioloides* is given in Table 1.

Flowering & Fruiting: Throughout the year.

Etymology: This species is named in honour of Dr. N.P. Balakrishnan, Sc. ex-Joint Director, Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore contributions to the taxonomy of Indian plants.

Table 1

<i>Euphorbia balakrishnanii</i> Binojk. & Gopalan	<i>E. corrigioloides</i> Boiss.
spreading from a weak rootstock, 20-30 cm long.	stems decumbent, ascending many arising from stout root cm long.
Petioles ca 3 mm long.	Petioles ca 2 mm long.
Leaves elliptic-oblong to suborbicular, entire or bluntly serrate along distal margins, 5-10 x 4-6 mm, with an irregular purple patch at the centre on adaxial surface.	Leaves oblong-elliptic or obacutely serrate all along the n 4-5 mm, purple patch absent, few scattered purple spots.
Chlorenchyma distinctly aggregated around the reticulate nerves of lamina.	Chlorenchyma not distinctly around the nerves of lamina.
Cyathia axillary, solitary or 2-3 together, glabrous or rarely puberulous.	Cyathia many in dense axillary cymes, puberulous.
Capsules acutely keeled, ciliate along keels only.	Capsules obtusely keeled, pub throughout.
Seeds oblong, ca 1 x 0.75 mm	Seeds ovoid, ca 0.75 mm ac

A new species of Euphorbia

Allied to *E. corrigioloides* Boiss. but differs in shorter stems, spre rootstock; elliptic-oblong or suborbicular and bluntly serrate leaves wi patches at centre on upper surfaces; in axillary, solitary or a few cluster keeled capsules with ciliate-hairy keels and oblong seeds. Comparison of *E. balakrishanii* and *E. corrigioloides* is given in Table 1.

Flowering & Fruiting: Throughout the year.

Etymology: This species is named in honour of Dr. N.P. Balakrishnan, Sci ex-Joint Director, Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore : contributions to the taxonomy of Indian plants.

Table 1

<i>Euphorbia balakrishnanii</i> Binojk. & Gopalan	<i>E. corrigioloides</i> Boiss.
<i>Stems</i> prostrate or decumbent, few, spreading from a weak rootstock, 20-30 cm long.	<i>Stems</i> decumbent, ascendent many arising from stout root cm long.
<i>Petioles</i> ca 3 mm long.	<i>Petioles</i> ca 2 mm long.
<i>Leaves</i> elliptic-oblong to suborbicular, entire or bluntly serrate along distal margins, 5-10 x 4-6 mm, with an irregular purple patch at the centre on adaxial surface.	<i>Leaves</i> oblong-elliptic or ob acutely serrate all along the 4-5 mm, purple patch absent few scattered purple spots.
<i>Chlorenchyma</i> distinctly aggregated around the reticulate nerves of lamina.	<i>Chlorenchyma</i> not distinctly around the nerves of lamina.
<i>Cyathia</i> axillary, solitary or 2-3 together, glabrous or rarely puberulous.	<i>Cyathia</i> many in dense axilla cymes, puberulous.
<i>Capsules</i> acutely keeled, ciliate along keels only.	<i>Capsules</i> obtusely keeled, pu throughout.
<i>Seeds</i> oblong, ca 1 x 0.75 mm	<i>Seeds</i> ovoid, ca 0.75 mm ac

A new species of *Euphorbia*

Allied to *E. corrigioloides* Boiss. but differs in shorter stems, spreading from a weak rootstock; elliptic-oblong or suborbicular and bluntly serrate leaves with irregular purple patches at centre on upper surfaces; in axillary, solitary or a few clustered cyathia; acutely keeled capsules with ciliate-hairy keels and oblong seeds. Comparison of various characters of *E. balakrishanii* and *E. corrigioloides* is given in Table 1.

Flowering & Fruiting: Throughout the year.

Etymology: This species is named in honour of Dr. N.P. Balakrishnan, Scientist Emeritus and ex-Joint Director, Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore for his significant contributions to the taxonomy of Indian plants.

Table 1

<i>Euphorbia balakrishnanii</i> Binojk. & Gopalan	<i>E. corrigioloides</i> Boiss.
<i>Stems</i> prostrate or decumbent, few, spreading from a weak rootstock, 20-30 cm long.	<i>Stems</i> decumbent, ascendent or suberect; many arising from stout rootstock, up to 50 cm long.
<i>Petioles</i> ca 3 mm long.	<i>Petioles</i> ca 2 mm long.
<i>Leaves</i> elliptic-oblong to suborbicular, entire or bluntly serrate along distal margins, 5-10 x 4-6 mm, with an irregular purple patch at the centre on adaxial surface.	<i>Leaves</i> oblong-elliptic or obliquely oblong, acutely serrate all along the margins, 5-15 x 4-5 mm, purple patch absent, rarely with few scattered purple spots.
<i>Chlorenchyma</i> distinctly aggregated around the reticulate nerves of lamina.	<i>Chlorenchyma</i> not distinctly aggregated around the nerves of lamina.
<i>Cyathia</i> axillary, solitary or 2-3 together, glabrous or rarely puberulous.	<i>Cyathia</i> many in dense axillary condensed cymes, puberulous.
<i>Capsules</i> acutely keeled, ciliate along keels only.	<i>Capsules</i> obtusely keeled, puberulous throughout.
<i>Seeds</i> oblong, ca 1 x 0.75 mm	<i>Seeds</i> ovoid, ca 0.75 mm across.

M.S. Binojkumar and R. Gopalan**Acknowledgements**

We are thankful to Mr. A. Radcliffe Smith, Kew for his valuable opinion on this species and Dr. V. Chelladurai, Research Officer in Botany, Survey of Medicinal Plants Unit - Siddha, Government Siddha Medical College Campus, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu for his field guidance to the locality. We are also thankful to Dr. V.J. Nair, Deputy Director, for Latin translation of the diagnosis and to Mr. A.T. Durgadas, Artist, Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore for the illustrations.