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NOTE
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Varsha Vilasrao Nimbalkar, Arun Prasanth Ravichandran & Milind Madhav Sardesai
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Abutilon neelgerrense var. fischeri T.K. Paul & M.P. Nayar (Malvaceae) after a century from southern India

Varsha Vilasrao Nimbalkar1, Arun Prasanth Ravichandran2 & Milind Madhav Sardesai3

1 Department of Botany, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, Maharashtra 431004, India.
2 Department of Botany, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, Maharashtra 411007, India.
3 varshanimbalkar8@gmail.com, prasanth96@gmail.com, sardesaimm@gmail.com (corresponding author)

The genus Abutilon Mill. is one of the larger genera of Malvaceae with about 120 species distributed in tropical and warm temperate regions (Mabberley 2017). It is represented by 12 species and 12 infraspecific taxa (Paul 1993) in India, whereas Sivarajan & Pradeep (1996) have reported seven species from southern peninsular India.

As a part of the revisionary study of the genus Abutilon in India specimens of A. neelgerrense were collected from Suruli Falls, Theni District, Tamil Nadu, with flowers and fruits. The specimens with flowers were collected in the month of March and with fruit in the month of May. After scrutiny of relevant literature and study of the specimens, it was identified as A. neelgerrense var. fischeri T.K. Paul & M.P. Nayar and confirmed by consulting protologue and Type.

Paul & Nayar (1985) described the variety based on a specimen collected by C.E.C. Fischer on January 1910 (Fischer 1581, CAL), from Coonoor River bank, Nilgiri District, Tamil Nadu. Now this variety was collected from the Meghamalai Mountain range, near Suruli Falls, Theni District, Tamil Nadu (population of 30–40 mature individuals) after 109 years and is the first re-collection after type.

Comparative morphology with its allied variety A. neelgerrense var. neelgerrense is presented in Image 1.

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ovate-lanceolate, acute to acuminate, 3-nerved with prominent midvein, pubescent on both surfaces. Corolla ca. 1.5 cm across, pale yellow; petals 5, 12–15 × 6–10 mm, obovate, truncate at apex, sometimes pointed and slightly reflexed, glabrous, ciliate on margins at the base.

Staminal column 5–6 mm long, densely pubescent, antheriferous at apex, free filaments, 2–3 mm long, yellow, glabrous. Ovary ca. 3.5 × 3 mm, ovoid, densely pubescent, 8–10-loculed, 2–3-ovules in each locule; style 8–10-branched, branches 7–8 mm long; stigmas
Rediscovery of *Abutilon neelgerrense* var. *fischeri*  

**Key to the varieties**

1a. Corolla dark yellow; staminal tube 7–8 mm long, glabrous, filaments forming clusters; mericarp curved at apex ................................................................. var. *neelgerrense*

1b. Corolla pale yellow; staminal tube up to 5mm long, stellate hairy, filaments free; mericarp not curved at apex .................................................................................................................................. var. *fischeri*

Capitate. Schizocarps ca 1.5cm in diameter, subcylindric, erect at apex; mericarps 8–10, ca. 15 × 5 mm, laterally compressed-reniform with ca. 3mm mucro, ventral side of base compressed forming notch, densely pubescent with simple and stellate hairs. Seeds 2–3 in each mericarp, reniform, hilum pubescent.

Flowering: November–March; fruiting: January–May.

Distribution: India (Tamil Nadu: Nilgiri and Theni districts), endemic.

Habitat: It occurs from 300–1500 m altitude in moist semi-shady situations along forested hill slopes.


**References**


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