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Cover: Golden-headed Lion Tamarin *Leontopithecus chrysomelas*. Watercolor and acrylics by P. Kritika.



INTRODUCTION

Manipur, a northeastern state of India, lies between 92°59'–94°46' E & 23°50'–25°42' N under the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot region of the world, harbors a rich floristic diversity and shows a high degree of endemism. The phytogeographical features and varying climatic regimes provide luxuriant growth of diverse flora. Recently, Botanical Survey of India reported a total of 22,214 angiosperm species from India (BSI 2024). Several exploration works have been reported on floristic explorations and discovery of new species from this state since the later part of the 19th Century (Clarke 1889; Kaith 1936; Deb 1961a,b; Singh 1990). Deb (1961a,b) reported a total of 1,961 species and 48 varieties of angiosperms in two important published works, “Dicotyledonous Plants of Manipur Territory” and “Monocotyledonous Plants of Manipur Territory”. Shukla & Baishya (1979) reported 53 species of flowering plants under 49 genera and 13 species of cryptogams to the flora of Manipur. Singh et al. (2000) recorded 2,380 species of plants under 1,052 genera belonging to 205 families from Manipur. A total of 27 species of flowering plants belonging to 26 genera under 17 families have been reported as new records from Manipur (Sharma et al. 2000). Fifteen angiosperm taxa of the family Cyperaceae and Poaceae from different parts of the valley districts of Manipur were reported by Khan et al. (2007). Balachandran & Ravikumar (2014) reported 14 species of flowering medicinal plants as new distribution records during exploratory studies in different parts of the state. Dhatchanamoorthy et al. (2018) added 11 angiosperm taxa to the flora of Manipur. Chanu & Bhattacharyya (2020) reported the occurrence of five species of woody climbers (Lianas) as new records to the flora of Manipur. A total of 4,012 species of plants under 1,405 genera belonging to 225 families were reported from the state (Agrawala et al. 2023).

Due to inaccessible hills and mountain habitats, plant exploration works have been slow and preparing a complete floristic inventory challenging. There has been a number of new records of distribution reported from Manipur during the last few decades (Khomdram et al. 2011; Gogoi & Mao 2012; Thongam et al. 2013; Yumkham et al. 2013; Nanda et al. 2014; Devi et al. 2015, 2016, 2021, 2022; Rao & Kumar 2015; Khuraijam et al. 2017; Pradheep et al. 2019; Chowla et al. 2020; Gogoi & Rana 2020; Gogoi et al. 2022; Singh & Mao 2024). Similarly, several new species have been discovered and added to the flora of Manipur, namely, *Roscoeia ngainoi* A.A. Mao & Bhaumik (Mao & Bhaumik

2007); *lone kipgenii* Kishor, Chowlu & Vij (Kishor et al. 2012); *Zingiber kangleipakense* Kishor & Škorničk. (Kishor & Leong–Škorničková 2013); *Nymphaea manipurensis* Asharani & Biseshwori and *Nymphaea manipurensis* var. *versicolor* Asharani & Biseshwori (Devi & Thongam 2014); *Thrixspermum indicum* Vik. Kumar, D. Verma & A.N. Rao (Kumar et al. 2017); *Trichodesma kumarianum* S.D. Yumkham, N.P. Devi, S.D. Khomdram & M.R. Devi (Yumkham et al. 2019); *Argostemma kamjongense* Sadokpam, S.D. Khomdram & S.D. Yumkham (Sadokpam et al. 2023); *Curcuma kakchingense* Bidyaleima, R. Kishor & G.J. Sharma (Laishram et al. 2023).

Studies conducted on limited accessible natural habitats in the state have nonetheless revealed high floristic diversity, with numerous records on species distribution, new records, and description of new species in the past. It is assumed that there could be a few unreported flora including new species and new records yet to be discovered and reported from the unexplored habitats of the state. The geographical features of the larger area (90%) of the state are inaccessible terrains of hills and mountains with poor road and communication facilities which have hindered floristic studies. Therefore, the present study aimed to explore and document floral diversity of angiosperms with special emphasis on unreported taxa from different parts of Manipur.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Extensive floristic surveys were conducted in the hill forests of Kamjong District and five valley districts (Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Kakching and Bishnupur) of Manipur from 2022 to 2024. Preparation of herbarium voucher specimens was done following the standard herbarium techniques (Jain & Rao 1976) and deposited at Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Eastern Regional Centre (ASSAM) & Manipur University Museum of Plants (MUMP), Department of Botany, Manipur University. Identification of specimens was done by referring to available floras and literature. The classification, nomenclature with synonyms is provided based on APG IV (2016), Brummitt & Powell (1992), accepted names were verified from POWO (2024) and IPNI (2024). All the species are listed alphabetically and described briefly with morphological characters, phenology, distribution and conservation Status (IUCN 2024). Microphotographs for analyzing morphological characters were obtained by using Stereo zoom Microscope (BA 210 Digital LED Motic), Sony Cybershot DSC–HX400V, Leica Wild M3Z

Stereo Microscope (Heerbrugg, Switzerland).

The details of each species are described below.

RESULTS

A total of four taxa under four different families of Spermatophytes were found to be new records and reported as additions to the state flora of Manipur. The reported plant species are *Epithema carnosum* Benth. (Gesneriaceae), *Flemingia latifolia* Benth. (Fabaceae), *Persicaria chinensis* var. *hispida* (Hook.f.) Kantachot (Polygonaceae) and *Solanum diphyllum* L. (Solanaceae).

1. *Epithema carnosum* Benth., *Scroph. Ind.* 57. 1835; C.B.Clarke, Commelyn. Cyrtandr. Bengal 129, t. 90. 1874; Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 4: 369. 1884; Kanjilal et al., Fl. Assam 3: 399. 1939; Giri & al., Mat. Fl. Arunachal Pradesh 231. 2008. (Gesneriaceae) (Image 1).

Synonyms: *Aikinia carnosum* (Benth.) G.Don

Stem herbaceous, 5–36 cm, puberulent; basal leaves unpaired, petiolate, 4.5–7.5 cm long, membranous, cordate, margin undulate-denticulate, obtuse apex, 5–12 × 5–11.5 cm, upper leaves in pair, petiolate or

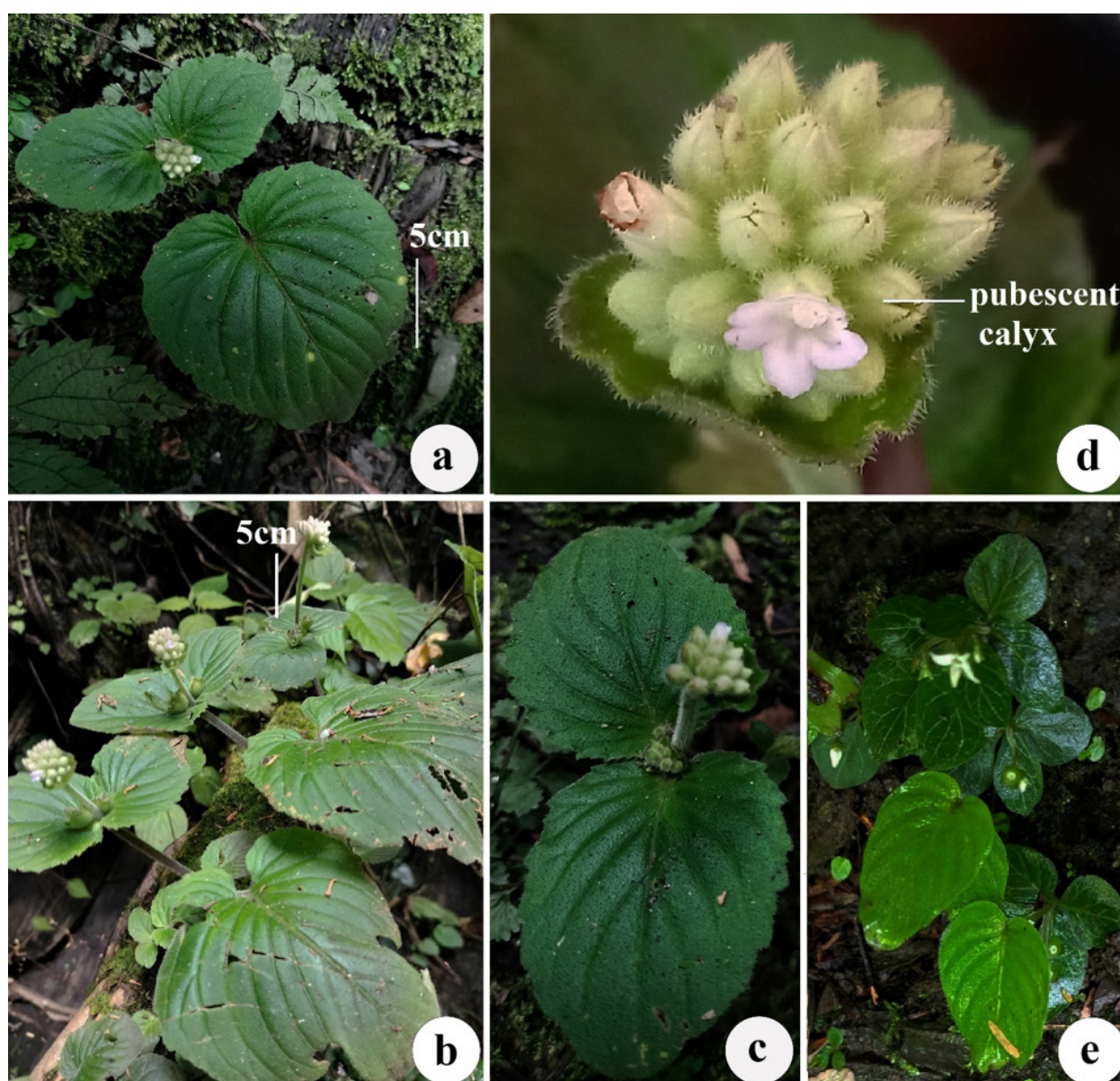


Image 1. *Epithema carnosum* Benth.: a—Lithophytic habit | b & c—epiphytic habit | d—inflorescence | e—young plant associated with *Argostemma kamjongense*. © Bimolkumar Singh Sadokpam.

subsessile (0–6 cm long), leaf blade subspherical, cordate to ovate-elliptic, acute apex, subcordate base to truncate base, margin subentire to dentate or crenate-sinuate, 2.3–11.5 × 2.2–5.8 cm; inflorescence dense cyme, one-many-flowered, peduncle 0.4–6 cm long, puberulent; bract 1, subcucullate, 1–12 × 2–8 mm, dentate; flowers cleistogamous; pedicels 2–6 mm long; calyx whitish-green, 5-lobed from above middle, 3.5–5.4 × 1–3 mm, lobes triangular, 1.4–2.2 × 0.6–1.2 mm, outer pubescent, 0.25–0.5 mm long, inner glabrous; corolla dark purple with white tinge, tube 3.2–4.2 × 2.1 mm, 2-lipped limb, apex notched, outside glabrous, villous inside; stamen 0.5–0.8 mm long, staminodes 0.7–0.8 mm long, longitudinal dehiscence; ovary ovoid-globose, style puberulent, simple, capsules subglobose, 3–4 mm wide; seeds oblong or ellipsoid

Flowering & Fruiting: July–September

Distribution: China, Thailand, Taiwan, Nepal, Borneo, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Myanmar, India (Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orissa, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and now in Manipur).

Specimen examined: India, Manipur, Kamjong District, Yeasom Hills, 24.698° N, 94.178° E, 950 m elevation, 19.ix.2022, Bimolkumar 1001.

Notes: It is a small annual herb primarily found to grow in tropical and subtropical forests. The taxon prefers to grow in terrestrial habitats but can sometimes adapt to grow as lithophytes and epiphytes.

Conservation status: Least Concern (LC)

2. *Flemingia latifolia* Benth., Miquel, Pl. Jungh. 2: 246. 1852; Kurz, Forest Fl. Burma 2: 375. 1877; Prain, J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, Pt. 2, Nat. Hist. 69(2): 441. 1897; Baker, Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 2: 228. 1876; Kuntze, Revis. Gen. Pl. 1: 199. 1891; Mukerjee, Bull. Bot. Soc. Bengal 6(1): 17. 1953; Gavade et al., Webbia 75(2): 157. 2020; Do & Gao, Phytotaxa 429(1): 28. 2020. (Fabaceae) (Image 2).

Synonyms: *Maughania latifolia* (Benth.) Mukerjee; *Flemingia congesta* var. *latifolia* (Benth.) Baker

Shrub, erect; leaves trifoliate; stipules 1–3 cm, lanceolate; petiole 4–9 cm, sometimes winged narrowly, leaflets papery, glands present, terminal leaflet elliptic–lanceolate, 8–14 × 4–6 cm, pubescent, apex acuminate, lateral leaflets oblique, broadly lanceolate; inflorescence rusty villous, 1–3 flowers per axil or raceme terminal; bracts elliptic, 0.7–1 × 0.5–0.6 cm, peduncle 0.2 cm; flowers 1–1.2 × 0.9–1 cm; calyx 0.9 cm; corolla longer than calyx, purplish-pink, standard obovate-elliptic, auricles obtuse; wings with slender claw, obovate-oblong; keel wider than wings, suborbicular, clawed with

auricle; ovary with brown hairs, elliptic, gland dotted; fruit elliptic, 11–14 × 6–7 mm, villous, inflated, beaked; seeds two, dark brown or black, suborbicular-globose.

Flowering & Fruiting: July–December

Distribution: China, India (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, now in Manipur), Indonesia (Java), Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam.

Specimen examined: India, Manipur, Imphal West, Heibok Hill, 24.743° N, 93.931° E, 815 m elevation, 28.x.2024, Bimolkumar 0017.

Notes: The taxon is a shrub which grows primarily in tropical forests. The species was found growing mainly along the foothills.

Conservation status: Not Evaluated (NE).

3. *Persicaria chinensis* var. *hispid* (Hook.f.) Kantachot, Thai Forest Bull. Bot. 38: 135. 2010; Hook.f., Fl. Br. Ind. 5(13): 45. 1886; Sam., Symbolae Sinicae 7(1): 180. 1929; Li et al., Fl. China 5. 301. 2003. (Polygonaceae) (Image 3)

Synonyms: *Polygonum chinense* var. *hispidum* Hook.f.; *Polygonum chinense* f. *hispidum* (Hook.f.) Sam.

Herb, perennial; stem erect, 80–84 cm tall, densely hispid internode; petiole 1.9 cm, lobed at base; leaf elliptic-ovate, 3.7–15 × 1.3–9 cm, abaxial and adaxial surfaces hispid, base cordate, entire margin, apex acuminate, ocrea tubular, 1.1 cm long, hairy, membranous, 11–13 parallel veins; inflorescence terminal or axillary, capitate, aggregated, peduncle 5 cm long, hairy; bract broadly ovate, each with 1–3 flowered; perianth white, 5-partite, tepals ovate, stamens 8, 0.2–0.3 cm long, pistil 0.4 cm long, style 3, connate; achenes, black, 0.6 cm wide, opaque, broadly ovoid.

Flowering & Fruiting: November–January.

Distribution: China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, India (Meghalaya, Nagaland, West Bengal and now in Manipur).

Specimen examined: India, Manipur, Imphal East (Nongmaiching Hill) 24.805° N, 94.031° E, 891m elevation, and Imphal West (Manipur University) 24.749° N, 93.925° E, 814 m elevation, 26.x.2023 and 31. vii. 2024, Bimolkumar 1020.

Note: It is a perennial plant growing primarily in temperate forest along the foothills.

Conservation status: Not Evaluated (NE).

4. *Solanum diphyllum* L., Sp. Pl. 184. 1753; Zhi Y.Zhang et al., in C.Y.Wu and P.H.Raven, Fl. China 17: 317. 1994; T.K.Paul & M.C.Biswas in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 37: 137. 2000. M.ReemaKumari in Rheede 23(1) 50–51. 2013. (Solanaceae) (Image 4).

Synonyms: *Pseudocapsicum diphyllum* (L.) Medik.

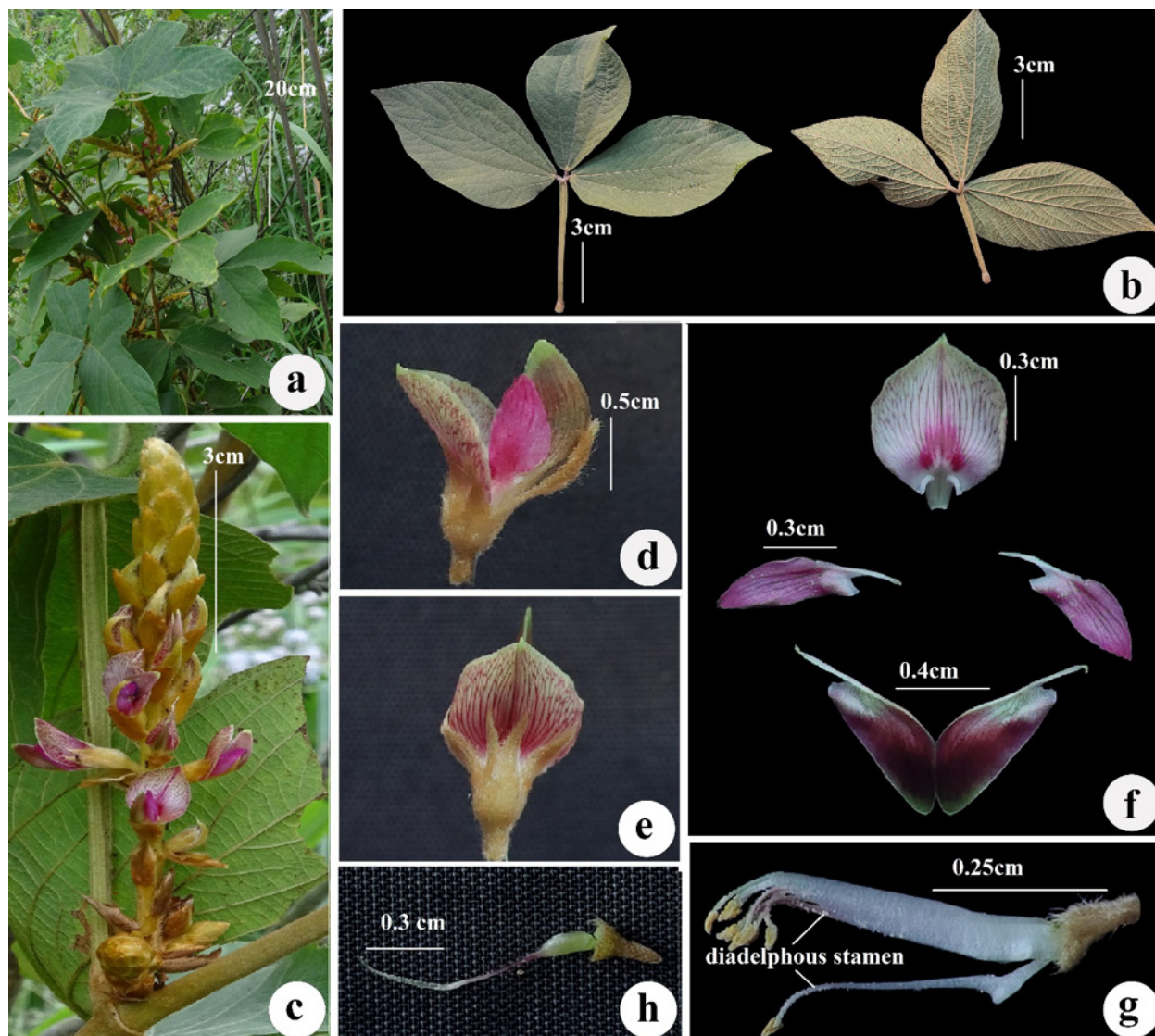


Image 2. *Flemingia latifolia* Benth.: a—habit | b—abaxial & adaxial leaves | c—inflorescence | d & e—single flower | f—dissected flower | g—stamen | h—pistil. © Bimolkumar Singh Sadokpam.

Shrub, perennial, upto 3 m high, minutely pubescent; leaves two at each node, unequal, linear-obovate or oblong-elliptic, margin entire, apex acute, 1.2–10.5 × 0.6–4.3 cm, lateral nerves 5–7 on each side, minutely hairy, petioles 0.5 cm; inflorescence racemose fascicle, up to 10-flowered; calyx cupular, 0.15–0.21 × 0.2–0.24 cm, minutely pubescent, 5-lobed; corolla stellate, 0.6–0.8 cm across, creamy white, 5-lobed, 0.4–0.6 × 0.25–0.3 cm, tube 0.1–0.2 cm long; stamens five, epipetalous, filaments 0.1 cm long, anthers oblong, 0.2 × 0.1 cm, yellow, dehiscing poricidally at first, later longitudinally; ovary globose, 0.1 cm long; style 0.3–0.5 cm long; berries globose, 0.6–1.0 cm in diam., glabrous, yellow or reddish-yellow, seeds reniform or discoid, 0.2 × 0.4 cm,

creamy yellow.

Flowering & Fruiting: March–November

Distribution: China, Taiwan, United Kingdom; Mexico, Central America, India (West Bengal, Assam and now in Manipur).

Specimen examined: India, Manipur, Imphal West, Singjamei Waikhom Leikai 24.773° N, 93.942° E, 803 m elevation, 10.xi.2023, Bimolkumar 1015.

Notes: It is easily distinguishable from other species of *Solanum* in having two unequal leaves at each node.

Conservation Status: Not Evaluated (NE).

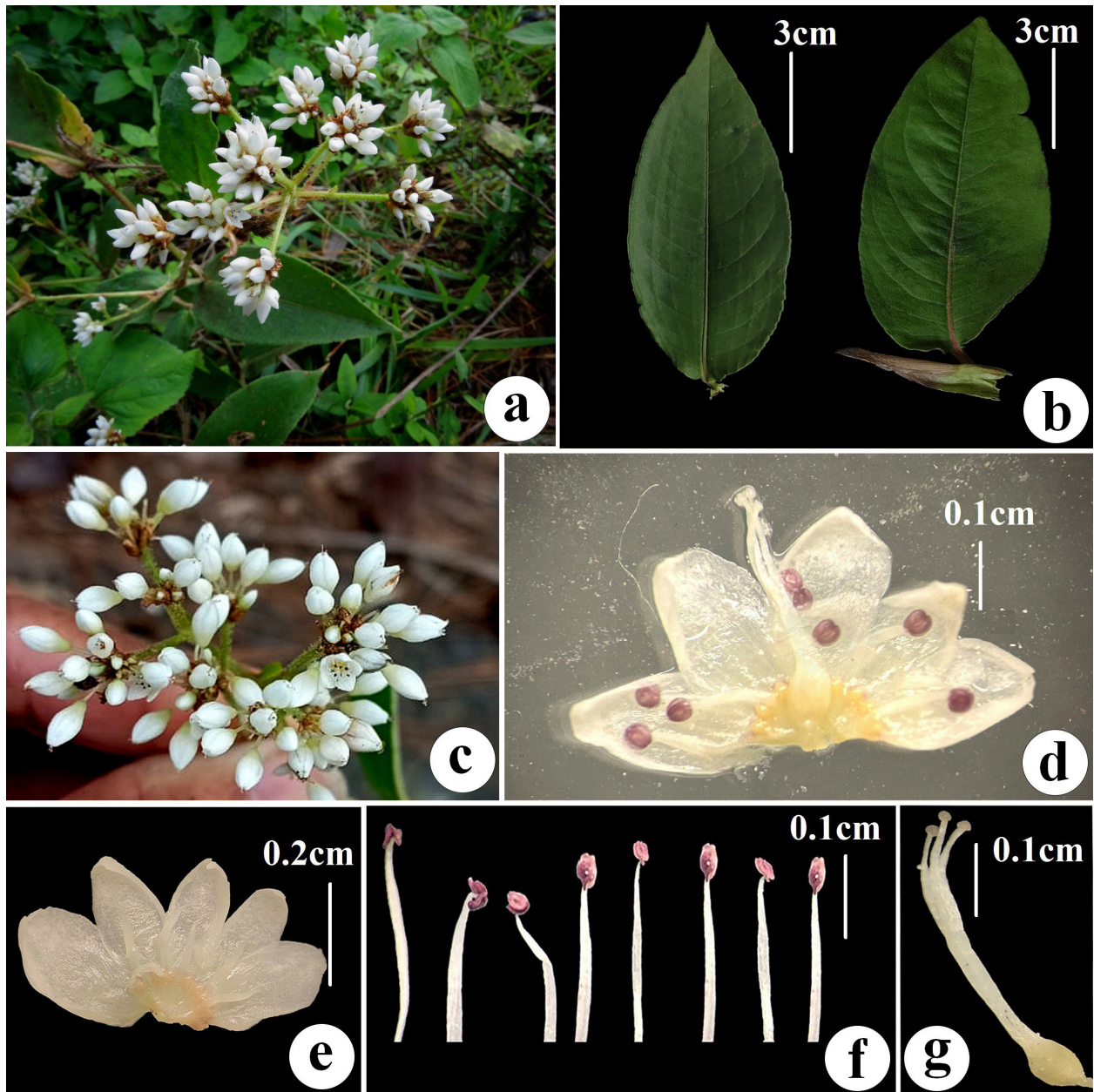


Image 3. *Persicaria chinensis* var. *hispida* (Hook.f.) Kantachot: a—habit | b—ventral leaf comparison between *Persicaria chinensis* var. *chinensis* and *Persicaria chinensis* var. *hispida* | c—inflorescence | d—dissected flower | e—tepals | f—stamens | g—pistil. © Sanatombi Devi Yumkham.

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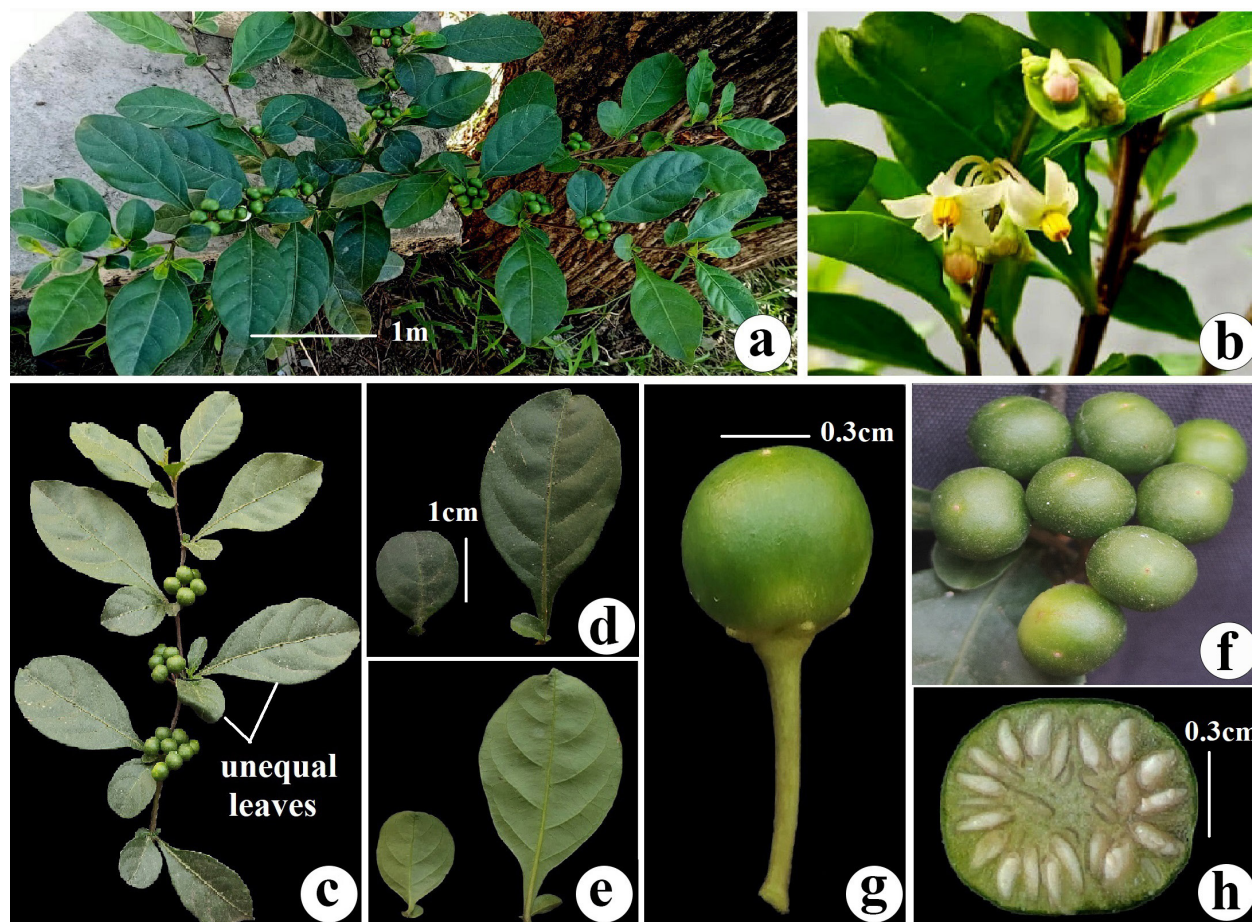


Image 4. *Solanum diphyllum* L.: a—habit | b—Inflorescence | c—a twig with fruit | d & e—abaxial & adaxial leaves showing unequal pair of leaves | f—fruits on plant | g—single fruit | h—T.S. of fruit. © Sanatombi Devi Yumkham.

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