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NOTE

OBERONIA MUCRONATA (D. DON) ORMEROD & SEIDENF. (ORCHIDACEAE), NEW ADDITION TO THE FLORA OF GUJARAT, INDIA

Mital R. Bhatt & Padamnabhi S. Nagar

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The genus *Oberonia*, belonging to the family Orchidaceae, subfamily Epidendroideae, tribe Malaxideae and subtribe Malaxidinae was described by John Lindley in 1830. It comprises between 329 species distributed from South Africa through Asia to Australia and the Pacific islands with a single species in Madagascar and tropical Africa

(Pearce & Cribb 2002; Govaerts et al. 2015).

The genus is epiphytic, rarely lithophytic, easily recognized by its clustered, fleshy, laterally compressed, ensiform, distichous leaves; terminal racemose inflorescence and small, numerous, non-resupinated flowers. In India, *Oberonia* is represented by 68 species (Ansari & Balakrishnan 1990; Misra 2007; Narayanan et al. 2010) and in Gujarat by two species (Anonymous 1996).

During the field survey for orchids of Gujarat, the first author collected a few plants of the genus *Oberonia* when it was flowering during the month of October 2014 from Dang District of southern Gujarat. On critical observation and perusal of the relevant literature (Santapau & Kapadia 1964; Abraham & Vatsala 1981) the specimens were identified as *Oberonia mucronata* (D. Don) Ormerod & Seidenf. After a scrutiny of the significant literature (Suryanarayana 1968; Desai 1976; Shah 1978, 1983; Vora 1980; Reddy 1987; Bole & Pathak 1988; Anonymous 1996, 1998–2002, 2001; Tadvi 2014), it was found to be a taxon hitherto not recorded from Gujarat State, hence it is reported here as a new

OBERONIA MUCRONATA (D. DON) ORMEROD & SEIDENF. (ORCHIDACEAE), NEW ADDITION TO THE FLORA OF GUJARAT, INDIA

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distribution record for the state. The present location in Gujarat is also the western most geographic range for this species. The voucher specimen is deposited in the herbaria of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (BARO), and the Botanical Survey of India, Jodhpur (BSJO). With the current report, the genus *Oberonia* is now represented by three species, viz., *O. falconeri* Hook.f., *O. brunoniana* Wight and *O. mucronata* (D. Don) Ormerod & Seidenf. in Gujarat.

Globally the species has a wide range of distribution. In India it is distributed in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand. In Gujarat very few individuals of this species were seen at Ahwa, Dangs District (Fig. 1). A detailed taxonomic description and images are provided here along with its habitat, regional distribution and geographical distribution to authenticate the new distribution record. An easy identification key to *Oberonia* species of Gujarat is provided.

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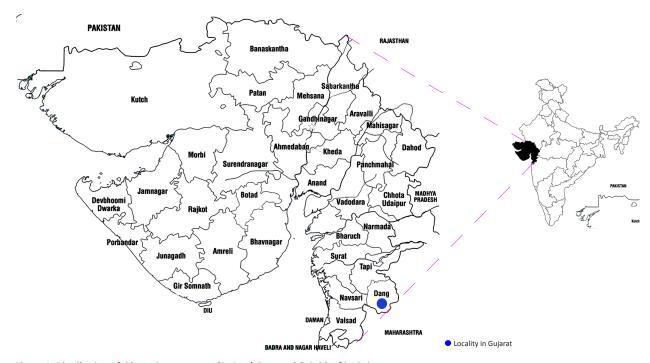


Figure 1. Distribution of Oberonia mucronata (D. Don) Ormerod & Seidenf in Gujarat.

Oberonia mucronata (Image 1)

(D. Don) Ormerod & Seidenf. in G. Seidenfaden, Contr. Orchid Fl. Thailand. 13:20 (1997). Stelis mucronata D. Don in Prodr. Fl. Nepal. 32. 1825; Cymbidium iridifolium Roxb. in Fl. Ind. ed. 1832, 3: 458 (1832); Oberonia denticulata Wight in Icon. P1. Ind. Orient. 5: t. 1625 (1851); Malaxis denticulata (Wight) Rchb.f. in Ann. Bot. Syst. 6: 208 (1861); O. iridifolia var. brevifolia Hook. f. in Fl. Brit. India 5: 676 (1890); O. iridifolia var. denticulata (Wight) Hook. f. in Fl. Brit. India 5: 676 (1890). O. denticulata var. iridifolia (Roxb.) S. Misra in J. Orchid Soc. India 3: 69 (1989); O. denticulata var. brevifolia (Hook.f.) S. Misra in J. Orchid Soc. India 3: 70 (1989); O. brevifolia (Hook.f.) Panigrahi in S.K. Murti & G. Panigrahi, Fl. Bilaspur Distr. 2: 591 (1999); O. smisrae Panigrahi in S.K. Murti & G. Panigrahi, Fl. Bilaspur Distr. 2: 593 (1999).

Isotype: 1832, Sillet, Bangladesh, N. Wallich, # 1948b (P00404924) (P!).

Erect or pendulous epiphytic herb, 19–22 cm long with inflorescence. Leaves 4 to 5, clustered, 7–9.5×1.5–1.7 cm, distichous, laterally compressed, thick, fleshy, pale green, oblong-ensiform with acute apex. Scape 3–4×0.3 cm, flattened, adnate to the upper leaf in young plants, Inflorescence 16–19 cm long, decurved, densely flowered. Flowers pedicelled, 2–2.5 mm long, golden yellow, bracteate. Bracts equaling the size of ovary, 1.3×0.7 mm, ovate to oblong, acute or obtuse, irregularly denticulate along the margin. Dorsal sepal

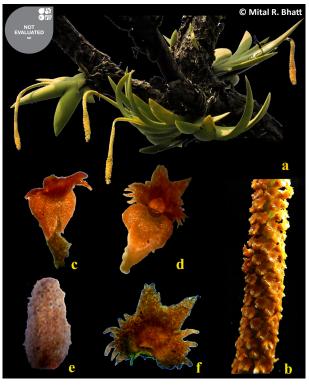


Image 1. *Oberonia mucronata* (D. Don) Ormerod & Seidenf. a - habit; b - part of inflorescence with flowers; c - side view of flower; d - front view of flower; e - petal; f - lip

Key to identification of Oberonia of the Gujarat

- 1. Lip with entire margin:

1–1.2×0.8 mm, ovate, acute, entire along the margins; lateral sepals narrower with acute apex. Petals 1×0.5, ovate to oblong, obtuse with irregularly erose margin. Lip quadrate in outline, glabrous or sparsely hairy, gland-dotted, 5×5 mm, 3-lobed, lateral lobes oblong, deeply dentate, spreading in flower except for the incurved distal end; middle lobe two-lobuled, lobules triangular, acute, deeply dentate. Ovary with pedicel 1.2–1.5 mm long, glabrous. Column 1 mm long, subglobose, sessile. Capsule 0.3× 0.1 mm, ellipsoid with a short pedicel (Image 1).

Specimen Examined: 0094 (BSJO!), 28.x.2014, 20°43′39.72″N & 73°40′22.86″E, 297m, Ahwa, Dangs, Gujarat, India, coll. Mital R. Bhatt.

Flowering & Fruiting: August-December

Habitat and Ecology: *Oberonia mucronata* was mostly observed on the tree trunk of *Terminalia crenulata* in moist deciduous forest, in association with other members of Orchidaceae like *Oberonia falconeri, Vanda tessellata* and *Vanda testacea*.

Global distribution: India (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand), Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Indonesia, Jawa, Laos, Malaya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

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