

## BULBOPHYLLUM BRACHYPODUM NOM. NOV. WITH TWO NEW VARIETIES

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## ABSTRACT

*Cirrhopetalum brevipes* is transferred to *Bulbophyllum* under the name of *B. brachypodum*. Further two new varieties, var. *geei* and var. *parviflorum* are described from Kameng District, and Bhutan in Eastern Himalayas respectively.

**Bulbophyllum brachypodum** A. S. Rao & Balak.  
nom. nov.

*Cirrhopetalum brevipes* Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India 5: 777, 1890 et in Hook. Ic. Pl. 21: t. 2056, 1891 (non *Bulbophyllum brevipes* Ridley, 1903).

var. **brachypodum**

Epiphyte; rhizome creeping, ramose, 3-4 mm thick; nodes slightly swollen; internodes covered for the lower one-third portion with tubular dull brown sheaths. *Pseudobulbs* oblong-ovoid to oblong-cylindric, 3-5 cm long, 2-3 cm thick, erect, smooth and covered with scarious tubular sheath when young, rugose, curved and partially covered with shredded fibres of the sheath when old. *Leaves* solitary at apex of pseudobulb; petiole ca 4 mm long, channelled; lamina elliptic-oblong, cuneate at base, retuse at apex, 6.5-11.5 cm long, 2.5-3.6 cm broad. *Inflorescence* lateral from the base of pseudobulb at the axil of sheath; peduncle 2-3 cm long, terete, 3-5-flowered; basal bracts 4-5, tubular, acute, ca 1.2 cm long, ca 6 mm broad, dull brown, scarious; floral bracts ovate-lanceate, shortly acuminate, ca 8 mm long, ca 3 mm broad, scarious, pale brown, 3-nerved; pedicels 3-5, terminal, subumbellate, with ovary ca 1.9 cm long, purplish-brown. *Flowers* 4.0-4.5 cm long, ca 1 cm across. *Dorsal sepal* ovate, obtuse, ca 1.2 cm long, ca 8 mm broad, dark purplish at base, finely purplish striated above, 7-nerved, margins hyaline. *Lateral sepals* lanceate-acuminate, broad, coherent and saccate at base, apical portion with incurved margins, connate laterally for about 2 mm on the mentum, falcate, gradually tapering from base to apex, ca 3.5 cm long, ca 8 mm broad at base, 5-nerved, pale yellowish-purple with a dark purplish-red pattern in 5 longitudinal rows, margins erose, minutely papillose dorsally. *Petals* ovate, subacute, ca 8 mm long, ca 6 mm broad, pale yellow with a dark purplish-red pattern in 3 rows, margins undulate, erose-ciliate, minutely papillose dorsally. *Lip* mobile, sessile on the foot, tongue-

shaped, ca 10 mm long, ca 3 mm wide, sharply curved at middle, longitudinally grooved at upper surface with 2 oblique ridges on sides; dark purplish-red on sides, pale in the groove. *Column* erect, ca 4 mm long, fleshy with a prominent depression from base to apex in front and 2 subulate hairs at apex; foot ca 5 mm long, ca 1.5 mm broad, incurved. *Operculum* ca 1.5 mm long, ca 1 mm broad, fleshy, oblong with 2 cavities. *Pollinia* 4, in 2 unequal pairs, the inner two smaller and thinner (Figs. 1-10).

*Flowering*: October.

*Specimens studied*: Tashiyangtsi, Eastern Bhutan (91°23'E & 27°30'N), alt. 2000 m, 24 October 1965. Balakrishnan 44298 (ASSAM); Flowered under cultivation at National Orchidarium, Shillong on 10 November 1968, Balakrishnan 43068 (ASSAM).

*Distribution*: Sikkim, Bhutan and Kameng District in NEFA.

var. **geei** A. S. Rao & Balak. var. nov.

Differt a var. *brachypodo* pedunculis uniflore vel bifloribus.

*Flowering*: October.

*Holotypus*: Dirang Dzong, Kameng District, NEFA (92°16'E & 27°20'N); 24 October 1965, E. P. Gee 43067 (ASSAM).

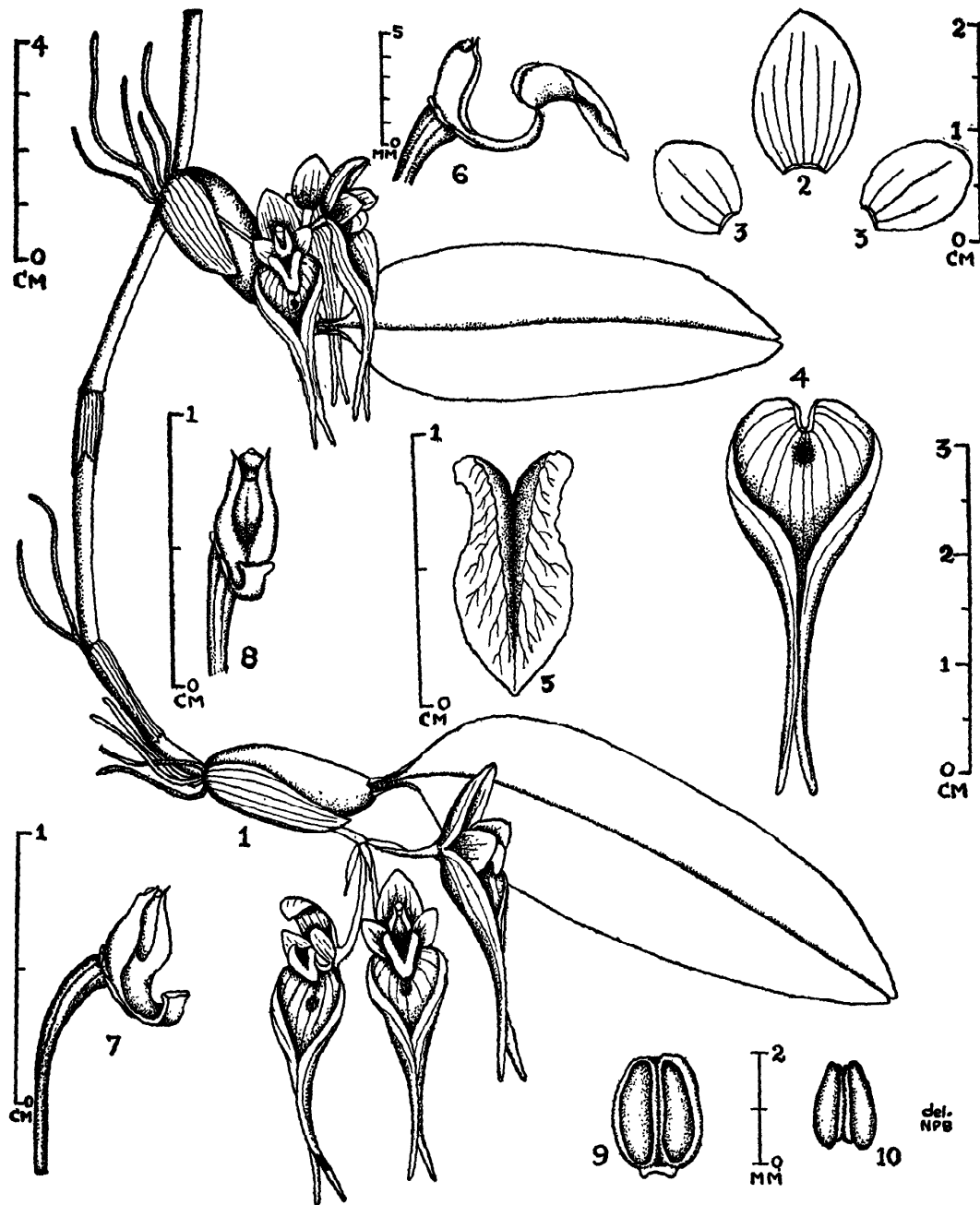
var. **parviflorum** A. S. Rao & Balak. var. nov.

Differt a var. *brachypodo* pedunculis brevioribus, ca 5 mm longioribus et floribus parvis, ca 2 cm longioribus.

*Flowering*: August.

*Holotypus*: Gumdrithang, Eastern Bhutan (91°25'E & 27°38'N), alt. 2000 m, 16 March 1965, flowered at National Orchidarium, Shillong on 23 August 1965, Balakrishnan 43004 A (CAL) et Isotypus, Balakrishnan 43004 B (ASSAM).

The authors agree with Holttum and most recent authors in using the generic name *Bulbophyllum* Thouars for all species of *Cirrhopetalum* Lindley as there is hardly any distinction between the two genera.



*Bulbophyllum brachypodum* A. S. Rao & Balak.

Figs. 1-10: 1. Habit. 2. Dorsal sepal. 3. Lateral petals. 4. Lateral petals. 5. Lip. 6. Column with lip, side view. 7. Column with foot. 8. Column, front view. 9. Operculum. 10. Pollinia.

The plants of var. *geei* were collected by Mr. E. P. Gee, the well known naturalist, while on a fishing expedition in Kameng District. The live plants are under cultivation since then in his garden at Evergreen Cottage, Upper Shillong as well as in the National Orchidarium of Botanical Survey of India, Woodlands, Shillong. These plants consistently showed 1 or 2 flowers per peduncle during the last three flowering seasons. However, apart from

this seemingly constant character, no other striking differences from var. *brachypodum* were observed. The plants of var. *parviflorum* were collected by the junior author from Eastern Bhutan and are under cultivation for the last three years at National Orchidarium. These consistently showed shorter peduncles and quite smaller flowers. A more thorough survey of this species in the Eastern Himalayas may reveal greater variability.