

SOLIVA ANTHEMIFOLIA (JUSS.) R. BR. (ASTERACEAE) - A NEW GENERIC RECORD TO THE FLORA OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

The present paper highlights the occurrence of *Soliva anthemifolia* (Juss.) R.Br. as a new generic record to the flora of Himachal Pradesh collected from Pong dam wetland area of district Kangra (H.P.). This species has been found hitherto unknown to the flora of Himachal Pradesh. Notes on its morphological characters, habit and habitat are given.

INTRODUCTION

Himachal Pradesh harbours vast floristic diversity which is enumerated in the Flora of Himachal Pradesh by Chowdhery & Wadhwa (1984), the first consolidated analytical account of the flora of the State. Later, a large number of floristic explorations have been conducted by various workers (Dhaliwal & Sharma, 1999; Singh & Rawat, 2000; Kaur & Sharma, 2004; Singh & Sharma, 2006). During ecological survey of Kangra district conducted in March 2008, authors collected a plant which on critical microscopic examination and screening of relevant literature found to be a new generic record to the flora of Himachal Pradesh and identified as *Soliva anthemifolia* (Juss.) R.Br.

(syn. *Gymnostylus anthemifolia* Juss.) of family Asteraceae.

Genus *Soliva* Ruiz & Pav. comprising of 12 species is distributed mostly in Australia, South America and Central America (Munz, 1959). *S. anthemifolia* (Juss.) R.Br. is a native to tropical Queensland and New South Wales (Australia), where it is considered a good fodder. In India, genus *Soliva* Ruiz & Pav. is represented by only one species recorded for first time from northern districts of Uttar Pradesh (Bhattacharyya, 1963) and later on it was reported from other parts of country (Sharma & Kachroo, 1981; Shetty & Singh, 1987; Gaur, 1999; Kumar, 2001). The

present report indicates a further extension of its distribution, and in Ransar it appears to be naturalized and approaching the status of a local weed. In present communication the description and nomenclature is provided along with picture of the plant to ensure its identity (Fig. 1 and 2).

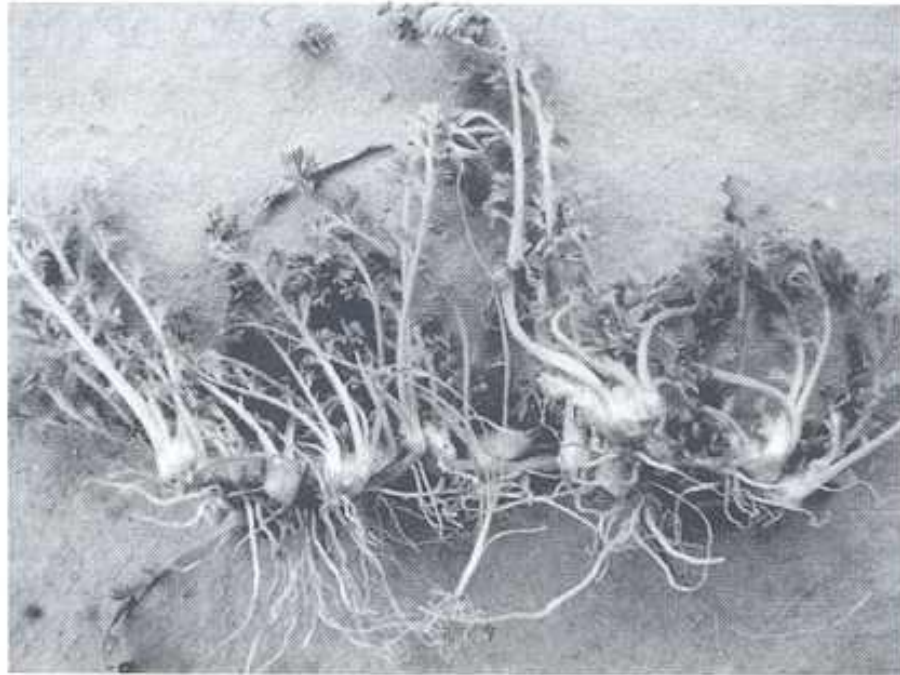


Fig. 1. *Soliva anthemifolia* with stolons



Fig. 2. *Soliva anthemifolia* with sessile heads

Soliva anthemifolia (Juss.) R.Br. in Trans. Linn. Soc. Bot. 12: 102. 1818; Kitamura in Acta Phytotax. Geobot. 1:265.1932 et 9: 30. 1940; Bhattacharyya in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 5: 375. 1963; Banerjee in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 10: 234. 1970; Hara, Fl. East Himal. 2: 140. 1971; Maheshwari & Singh in J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 69: 452. 1972; Raizada, Suppl. Duthie Fl. Gang. Plain 133. 1976; Mabberley in Taxon 30:17.1981; Kitamura & Gould in Hara *et al.*, En. Fl. Pl. Nepal 3: 43. 1982; Rao *et al.*, Fl. Ind. Enum. Astera. 72. 1988. *Gymnostylus anthemifolia* Juss. in Ann. Mus. Paris 4 : 262. 1804.

Diffuse, creeping, stoloniferous, annual herb, spreading through stolons into dense tufts, 10-30 cm across, rooting from below the sessile heads. Roots fibrous, tough. Stems sparsely to moderately clothed with long hairs. Leaves radical, alternate, petiolate, oblong to oblong-lanceolate, spreading to form circular patches, 3-10 cm long, 2-3 pinnatisect; segments lanceolate-oblong, acute or apiculate, covered with long strigose hairs. Heads sessile, heterogamous, several together, greenish-yellow, enclosed within leaf base, densely villous hairy, fruiting heads much enlarged. Involucral bracts in two series, 2 mm long, ovate-oblong, acute, covered with long strigose hairs, margins scarious, white. Receptacle flat, villous within. Ray florets female, in several rows, without corolla. Disc florets tubular, male or sterile, 2-3 dentate. Anther-base obtuse. Achenes dark brown, flattened, compactly arranged in mature heads, bordered by transversely rugose pale brown wing, crowned by the persistent style. Pappus absent.

Fl. & Fr.: November - May.

Habitat: Common on river banks, moist places and crop fields, between 400 - 700 amsl.

Distribution: Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Australia and South America.

Specimen examined: Ranser Island (PLP 12719) of district Kangra, Himachal Pradesh.

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