Eleocharis wichurae (Cyperaceae): A new record for India

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Abstract

Eleocharis wichurae Boeckeler (Cyperaceae) is reported for the first time from India. The present report provides a brief description, along with a photoplate and notes on distinguishing characters for its easy identification in further collections.

Keywords: Cyperaceae, Eleocharis, India, new record, Sikkim Himalaya

Introduction

The authors are engaged in the taxonomic revision of the genus Eleocharis R.Br. in India. While examining the materials of Eleocharis in BSHC (Botanical Survey of India, Sikkim Himalayan Regional Centre, Gangtok) some specimens were found identified as E. congesta D. Don. Perusal of relevant literature (Boeckeler, 1870; Dai & Strong, 2010) and critical analysis of the glumes and nut morphology, identity of the species was revealed as E. wichurae Boeckeler. A thorough scrutiny of literature (Clarke, 1893; Cook, 1996; BSI, 2018) revealed that this species is so far not recorded from India and hence it is reported here as a new record for India.


Perennial herbs. Stolons short or absent. Culms greyish green, tufted, c. 30 cm high, slender, sharply 4-angled, smooth; sheaths 2 per culm, reddish to purplish, mouth obliquely truncate. Spikelet solitary, terminal, placed oblique at the tip of culms, brownish to pale green, ovoid to narrowly ovoid-oblong, 8–12 × 3–4 mm, distinctly wider than the culm, many-flowered, apex acute. Basal glumes 2, empty; basal-most glume amplexicaul for whole spikelet base; fertile glumes pale green medially and rust-colored striate on both sides, tightly spirally imbricate, oblong to elliptic and boat-shaped, c. 4 × 2.3 mm, membranous, midvein thin and obscure, margins broadly hyaline, apex obtuse-rounded. Perianth bristles 5 or 6, unequal, rust colored, as long as or slightly longer than achene, plumose with spreading hairs; hairs c. 0.3 mm long. Style 3-lobed. Achenes pale olivaceous to brownish, obovoid to broadly obovoid, c. 1.7 × 1 mm, obtusely 3-sided, slightly compressed, both surfaces smooth, apex not constricted; persistent style base narrowly obovoid; style base as long as achene or nearly so, laterally compressed, apex acute to obtuse.

Flowering & fruiting: July – September.

Distribution: China, Japan, Korea, Russia (Far East, Siberia) (Dai & Strong, 2010) and now in India.

Specimen examined: INDIA, Sikkim, Chungthang district, on the route of Chungthang-Lachen, 16.08.1989, N.R. Mandal 10470 (BSHC).

Note: E. wichurae is close to E. tetraquetra Nees, hence at times it is also treated as a variety of the latter. Clarke (1893) in Hooker’s Flora of British India treated this name as a synonym under the latter. Therefore, it is obvious that the description of E. tetraquetra in the Flora of British India includes...
Fig. 1. *Eleocharis wichurae* Boeckeler: a. Herbarium specimen (N.R. Mandal 10470, BSHC); b. Achene; c. Glume; d–g. Comparison of achenes (with or without perianth bristles): d & f. *E. tetraquetra*, e & g. *E. wichurae*. 
the features of *E. wichurae* as well. However, it can be distinguished from *E. tetraquetra* by its larger glumes, plumose perianth bristles with spreading hairs, 1.7 mm long achenes (as opposed to 1.4 mm in *E. tetraquetra*) and narrowly ovoid persistent style bases.

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**Literature Cited**


