

Nervilia holochila (F.Muell.) Schltr. (Orchidaceae) — A new record to Arunachal Pradesh, India

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Nervilia holochila was first formally described in 1866 by Ferdinand von Mueller who gave it the name *Pogonia holochila* and published the description in *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae*. Later the species was transferred in the genus *Nervilia* (Rudolf Schlechter, 1906). *Nervilia holochila* is a terrestrial species and commonly known as 'ribbed shield orchid'.

During the month of June, 2017, a field trip was conducted to Dying Ering wildlife sanctuary located the East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Survey team entered the sanctuary from the river bank (Ngopok area) by diesel powered boat. The sanctuary is surrounded either side by tributary of Siang River. A *Nervilia* species was found in flowering stage under the dried bushes of *Chrysopogon Zizanioides*, *Imperata brasiliensis* and *Saccharum spontaneum*. The species was found at an elevation of 126 m. The GPS coordinates recorded was 28°00'24.8" N and 95°27'38" E. After critical literature survey (Pearce and Cribb, 2002; Swami, 2016) and consultation of Orchid Herbarium Tippi (OHT), the species was identified as *Nervilia holochila* (Figure 1), which is a new record to the orchid flora of India. The specimens have been deposited in OHT (Coll. No. 5450 & 5451).

Description

Tuber solitary, fleshy, rounded, 1.2 – 3 cm wide. Leaf solitary, stiffly erect, apical; lamina broadly ovate 15 – 20 cm × 5 – 7 cm, dark green, apex acute to acuminate. Inflorescence

a terminal raceme, 150 – 250 mm tall, fleshy; peduncle elongating in fruit. Flowers 1 – 6, resupinate, porrect to nodding, star-shaped, opening narrowly to widely, 20 – 30 mm × 20 – 30 mm, pink, cream or greenish with pink to mauve labellum. Sepals and petals linear to narrowly obovate. Dorsal sepal erect or incurved, 20 – 25 mm × 3 – 3.5 mm; lateral sepals divergent, 20 – 25 mm × 3 – 3.5 mm; petals spreading, 19 – 23 mm × 3 – 3.5 mm. Labellum 18 – 24 mm × 10 – 14 mm, 3-lobed; lateral lobes incurved to enclose column; midlobe with a filigree of darker hairy veins, undulate margins and 3 narrow hairy ridges. Column 10 – 12 mm long, wider towards the tip. Column foot absent. Capsules pendulous, dehiscent.



Figure 1: *Nervilia holochila*

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