



Trichosanthes napoensis (Cucurbitaceae), a new species from Guangxi, China

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Abstract

A new species of the genus *Trichosanthes* (Cucurbitaceae), *T. napoensis*, is described and illustrated from Guangxi Province, western China. It is closely related to *T. pedata* Merr. & Chun, but it can be distinguished from the latter by having 3-fid tendrils, a fruit apex with a prominent protrusion, and oblong-elliptical seeds with a ridge at the margin.

Keywords: China, Cucurbitaceae, new species, *Trichosanthes*

Introduction

The genus *Trichosanthes* L. (1753:1008) is one of the largest genera of family Cucurbitaceae, consists of 90–100 species and is distributed from India through China to Japan and Australia and Fiji (Huang & Jeffrey 2011; Cooper & de Boer 2011; de Boer & Thulin 2012; Yueh & Cheng 1974, 1980). Most species have large white or pale yellow petals with conspicuously fringed margins, with the fringes sometimes several cm long. Recent results of molecular systematics and biogeography have indicated that *Trichosanthes* was not monophyletic, and as a result the fringeless genus *Gymnopetalum* Arn. (1840:52) was merged with it to retain monophyly (de Boer *et al.* 2012). A prior study showed that a single species of *Trichosanthes* described from the Caribbean did not belong in the genus, and this was transferred to a new genus, *Linnaeosicyos* H. Schaeff. & Kocyan (Schaefer *et al.* 2008).

There are approximately 40 species of *Trichosanthes* in China (14 endemic), most of which have fruit that are globose, ovoid, or fusiform, fleshy, berries usually glabrous, with seeds suspended in pulp (Huang *et al.* 2009; Huang & Jeffrey 2011; Yueh & Cheng 1974, 1980). Morphologically, *Trichosanthes* is characterized by the morphology of leaves and flowers and the size and form of bracts, and the morphology of fruits and seeds can be especially helpful to identify the different species (Huang & Jeffrey 2011; de Boer & Thulin 2012; Yueh & Cheng 1974, 1980).

During our field work in the Fourth National Survey on Chinese Material Medical Resources, unusual endemic species of *Trichosanthes* was collected in Napo County, Guangxi Province. Based on comparisons with relevant specimens in IBK, GNU, GXMG, NAS and PE, we concluded that these specimens represent a new species as described below.

Taxonomy

Trichosanthes napoensis D. X. Nong & L. Q. Huang, *sp. nov.* (Figs. 1–2)

Type:—CHINA. Guangxi Zhuangzu Autonomous Region, Baise City, Napo County, Pingmeng Town, Nianjing Village, Xima Tun, Roadside and shrub of Limestone foothills, alt. 978 m, 12 October 2014, D. X. Nong 451026141012021LY (Holotype: GXMG! (specimen with fruit); isotypes: GXMG!, CMMI!).