

Ophiopogon acerobracteatus (Convallariaceae), a new species from southern China

Wei-Qiu Liu, Jian-Hua Jin & Wen-Bo Liao*

State Key Laboratory of Biocontrol, School of Life Sciences, Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou 510275, China (*corresponding author's e-mail: lsslwb@mail.sysu.edu.cn)

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Ophiopogon acerobracteatus R.H. Miao ex W.B. Liao, J.H. Jin & W.Q. Liu, a species with affinity to *O. intermedius* in section *Ophiopogon*, is described as a new species from Guangdong, China.

Key words: Convallariaceae, new species, *Ophiopogon*, taxonomy

Ophiopogon, a perennial herbaceous genus, has about 65 species mainly distributed in warm-temperate, subtropical and tropical Asia. Of the species, 47 are distributed in China, with 38 of them being endemic (Wu & Raven 2000). *Ophiopogon* belongs to the tribe Ophiopogoneae in the Convallariaceae (Dahlgren *et al.* 1982, Wu *et al.* 2003), and the genus is divided into two sections, *Ophiopogon* and *Sarmentosii* (Yang & Li 1990).

In an inventory of plant diversity in Mt. Maluan, Shenzhen, Guangdong, China, in 2002–2003, a new species was identified. It belongs to sect. *Ophiopogon*, a classification based on the following properties: the roots are fleshy and tuberous near the tip, the rhizome is short and thick, the leaves are basal and tufted, and the scape arises from tufted leaves (Yang & Li 1990).

***Ophiopogon acerobracteatus* R.H. Miao ex W.B. Liao, J.H. Jin & W.Q. Liu, *sp. nova* (Fig. 1)**

Species O. intermedio affinis, sed racemo ca. 8–12-flore (in hoc 15–20-flore), bracteis 3, bracteis centralibus longissime aristatis, usque ad 17 mm longis (in hoc bractea 1, aristata nulla) differt.

TYPE: China. Guangdong, Shenzhen, Mt. Maluan (22°37′–22°39′N, 114°17′–114°22′E), in the north slope of Fengshushan and Kengweitou, alt. ca. 200 m, 3.VII.2003 J. S. Liang 1337 (holotype SYS).

Herb. Roots 1–2 mm thick. Stem short, residual sheath fibriform after inferior leaves wither. Leaves basal, tufted; leaf blade graminoid or lanceo-linear, 22.5–48(–55.5) cm × 8–12 mm, 9–15-veined, brownish-yellow after drying, apex acute, leaf tufts surrounded by membranous sheath. Scape ca. 26–27 cm long, lower part often covered with membranous sheath. Inflorescence raceme, ca. 6–7 cm, rachis ca. 20 cm long, 8–12-flowered. Flowers solitary or in clusters of 2. Bracts 3, ovate, lateral bracts 4 × 1

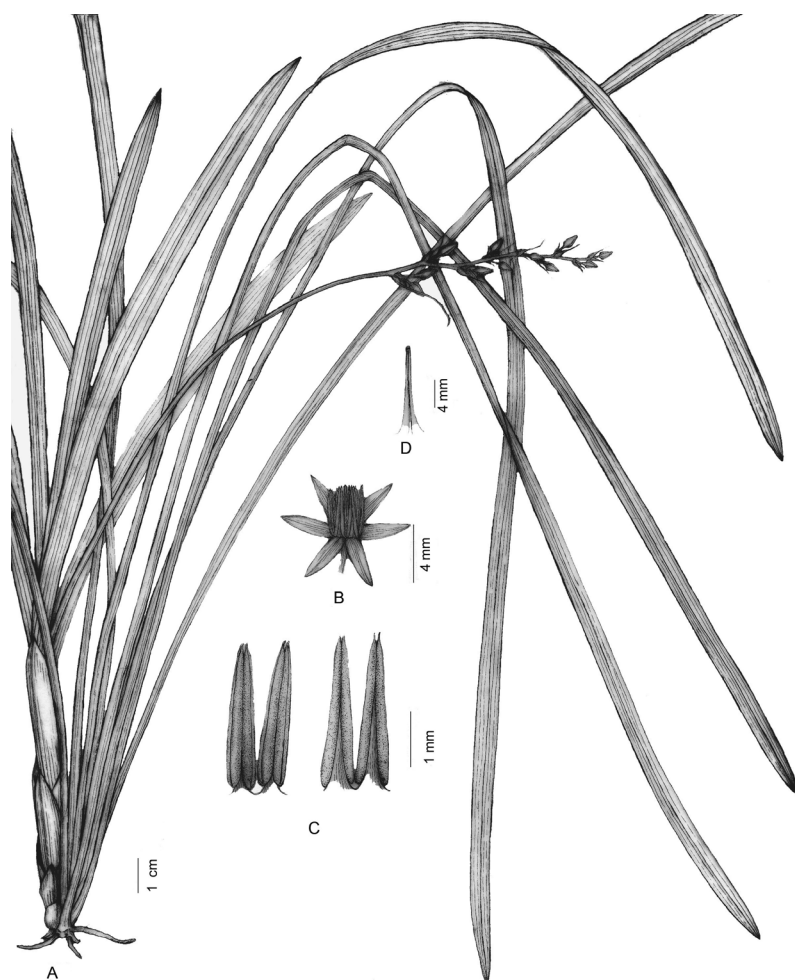


Fig. 1. *Ophiopogon acerobracteatus* (from holotype, drawn by Yun-Xiao Liu). — **A:** Plant. — **B:** Flower. — **C:** Stamens. — **D:** Arista of medium bract.

mm, medium bract ca. $4\text{--}5 \times 4$ mm, apex with a very long lanceolate or acicular arista, in undermost bracts up to 17 mm long, in upper only 3 mm long. Pedicel 3–5 mm long. Perianth white, ovate, ca. 3–5 mm long. Stamens 6, filaments very short, anther long-elliptic or long-ovate, ca. 3 cm long; ovary half hypogynous, style slightly thick, ca. 2 mm long, pubescent. Fruit not seen.

While our specimen seems close to *Ophiopogon intermedius*, it differs from the latter in several important characters, as detailed in Table 1. Most importantly, the inflorescence is 8–12-flowered (vs. 15–20-flowered in *O. intermedius*), and it has three bracts, with the medium bract having a very long arista (vs. one bract, without arista in *O. intermedius*).

Table 1. A morphological comparison between *Ophiopogon acerobracteatus* and *O. intermedius*.

Characters	<i>O. acerobracteatus</i>	<i>O. intermedius</i>
Leaf-blade dimensions	22.5–48(–55.5) cm \times 8–12 mm	15–55(–70 cm) \times 3–15 mm
Veins per leaf	9–15	5–9
Inflorescence	8–12-flowered	15–20-flowered
Length of scape	26–27 cm	(15–)20–50 cm
Bracts	three, 4–5 mm long, ovate, middle one with long arista	one, 15–40 mm long, subulate, linear or lanceolate, without arista

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