

Short Note

Didymoplexis flexipes J.J. Sm. (Orchidaceae), A New Record for Thailand

SAHUT CHANTANAORRAPINT^{1*}, CHUMPOL KHUNWASIT², MANIT KIDYOO² AND
PARINYANOOT KLINRATANA²

¹Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Prince of Songkla University, Hat Yai, Songkhla 90112, Thailand.

²Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand.

An addition to the orchid flora of Thailand, *Didymoplexis flexipes* J.J. Sm., is a newly recorded species for Thailand. This species as found in Thailand is described and illustrated.

The genus *Didymoplexis* Griff. (Orchidaceae) is comprised of 12 species which are widely distributed from tropical South Africa and Madagascar to the Pacific¹. All species of the genus are mycotrophic herbs, growing among accumulations of leaf litter or at the base of large clumps of grasses. They have been collected from sea level to approximately 1,000 m. altitude. Several species from Java appear to be most common in bamboo forest². Previously, Seidenfaden (1978)³ reported only one species of *Didymoplexis* in Thailand, namely *D. pallens* Griff. During a botanical trip to Khao Nan National Park, Nakhorn Si Thammarat Province, Peninsular Thailand, in May 2006, *D. flexipes* was found which is a new species record for Thailand.

The present study is based on specimens collected from Khao Nan National Park, Nakhorn Si Thammarat Province, Peninsular Thailand (CK-KNP 070, BCU). Determinations were made using the key to species of *Didymoplexis* in Smith (1921)⁴ and Comber (1990).

The morphological characters of the *Didymoplexis* specimen (CK-KNP 070, BCU) matched well with the key and description of *D. flexipes* J.J. Sm. in Smith (1921) and Comber (1990). Accordingly, *D. flexipes* J.J. Sm. is a new record for Thailand. The description below is based on the Thai materials. A key to the species of the genus *Didymoplexis* in Thailand is suggested below.

Key to the species

1. Lip with yellow band and callus along the middle part; margins of lip entire; claw of lip indistinct..... *D. pallens*
1. Lip without yellow band and callus along the middle part; margins of lip slightly erose; claw of lip distinct, with small bilobed appendage..... *D. flexipes*

* Corresponding author:
E-mail: sahut.c@psu.ac.th

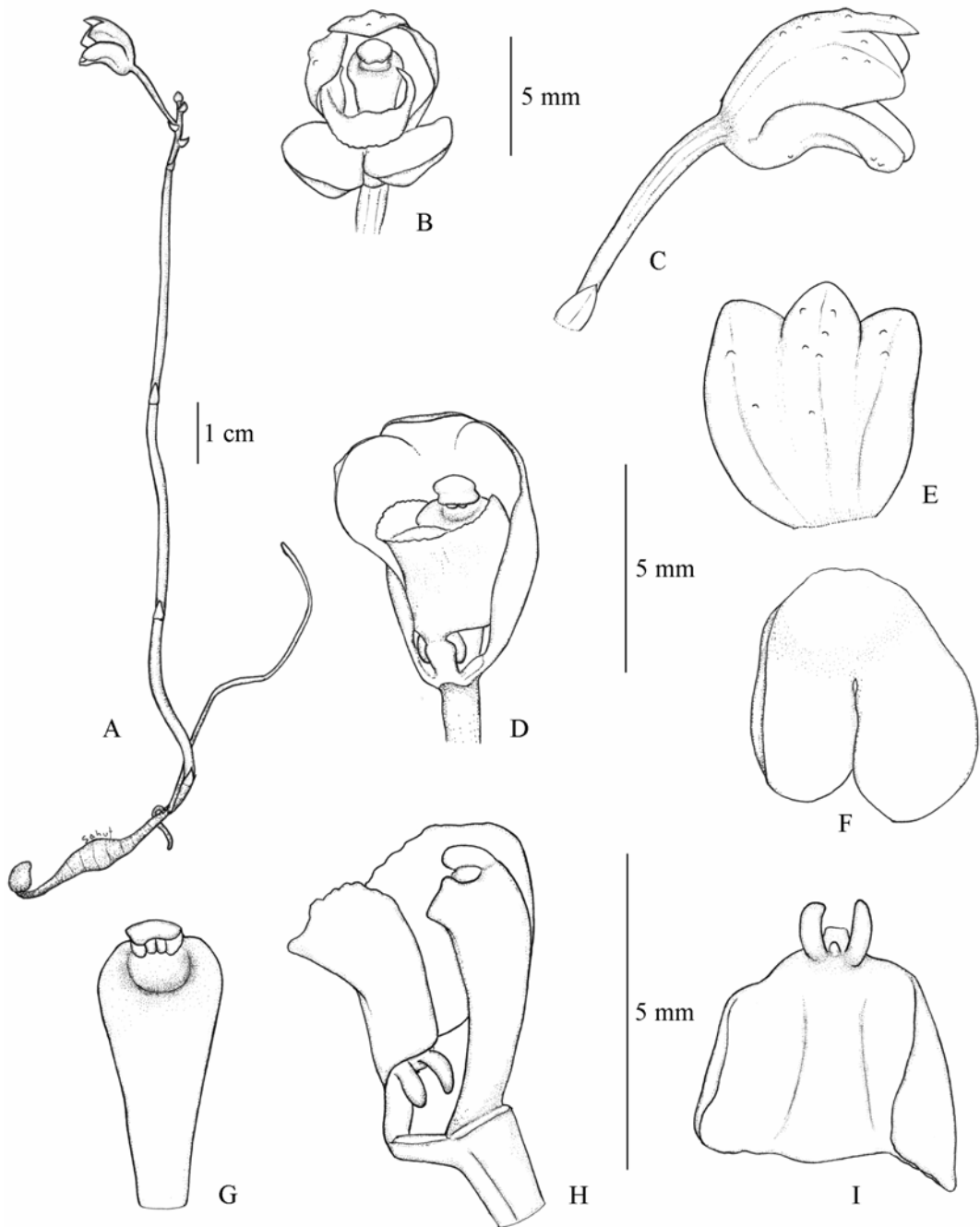


FIGURE 1. *Didymoplexis flexipes* J.J.Sm.: **A.** habit; **B-C.** flowers, **B.** front view, **C.** side view; **D.** flower without lateral sepals; **E.** dorsal sepal connate with petals; **F.** lateral sepals; **G.** column; **H.** column with lip; **I.** lip. Drawn by Sahut Chantanaorrapint from CK-KNP 070 (BCU).

Didymoplexis flexipes J.J. Sm.

Figure 1.

Didymoplexis flexipes J.J. Sm., Bull. Jard. Bot. Buitenzorg, ser. 3, 3: 250. 1921; J. B. Comber, Orch. Java: 83. 1990.

Plant terrestrial, mycotrophic. *Rhizome* fleshy, irregularly cylindrical to fusiform tubers, ca. 3.5 cm long, 0.2–0.6 cm diam. *Inflorescence* erect, to 12 cm tall, bearing few flowers opening successively, only one flower at a time; scape gray, fleshy. *Bract* ovate-triangular, 1.5–3.0 mm long, apex acute. Pedicels slender, ca. 0.5 cm long. *Flower* whitish-brown, ca. 1.3 cm long including ovary. Sepals and petals connated, forming a bilabiate appearance; upper half subquadrate, slightly hooded, formed from the connation between petals and dorsal sepal; apex 3-lobed, lobe ca. 1.5 mm long; lower half oblong-orbicular, deeply split from the upper half, apex deeply bilobed, rounded, each lobe ca. 2.5 mm long, slightly overlapping, basal part more or less gibbous. Lip white, subquadrangular ca. 4 mm long, 6 mm broad, attached at column foot; apex truncate, slightly recurved, lateral margin faintly eroded; base with short claw and small bilobed appendage. Column slightly curved, slender, ca. 0.4 cm long, without wing. Anther cap cucullate, smooth. Pollinia coarsely granulate. Stigma rounded. Fruit not seen.

Thailand.– Peninsular: Nakhorn Si Thammarat [Khao Nan National Park, CK-KNP 070 (BCU)].

Distribution.– Indonesia (West Java), Thailand (Peninsular).

Ecology.– Growing on humus, under shade of mossy forest, ca. 1,200 m altitude. Flowering in May.

Note.– *Didymoplexis flexipes* has previously been reported only from Java in Indonesia^{2,4}. This species is distinct from other species of *Didymoplexis* in having a small bilobed appendage on the claw of lip, and the margin of lip all rounded and faintly erose.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Obchant Thaithong, Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, for her valuable comments on the first draft of the manuscript. This work was supported by the TRF/BIOTEC Special Program for Biodiversity Research and Training and PTT Company Limited grant BRT R_149003.

LITERATURE CITED

1. Seidenfaden, G. and Wood, J. J. 1992. The orchids of Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore. Olsen and Olsen, Fredensborg, Denmark.
2. Comber, J. B. 1990. Orchids of Java. Bentham-Moxon Trust, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.
3. Seidenfaden, G. 1978. Orchid genera in Thailand 6. Neottioideae Lindl. Dansk Botanisk Arkiv, 32: 1–195.
4. Smith, J. J. 1921. Die Orchideen von Java. Sechster Nachtrag. Bulletin du Jardin Botanique de Buitenzorg, ser. III, 3: 227–333.

Received: 10 June 2008

Accepted: 15 August 2008