

Note on the distribution of *Lophopogon kingii* Hook.f. (Poaceae), an endemic grass from Eastern Ghats.

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the distributional notes on *Lophopogon kingii* Hook.f., which is an endemic grass reported from the Eastern Ghats. Detailed description and illustration are provided here for easy identification.

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Introduction:

Lophopogon, an endemic genus of Poaceae is represented by 2 species viz., *Lophopogon kingii* Hook.f. & *Lophopogon tridentatus* (Roxb.) Hack. of which, *Lophopogon kingii* is one of the endemic species which is restricted to Monghyr district of Bihar state. After a gap of 120 years, first author collected the species from a locality other than its type locality.

During the floristic survey of Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha State, one of the authors (K.C.Mohan) has collected a grass species from hill ranges of Tikarpada. After critical examination, it is identified as *Lophopogon kingii*, an endemic grass which was known only from type locality. This was collected by Mokim from Monghyr district of Bihar State in 1894.

Presently, the occurrence of this grass is confined to the limited area in hill ranges of Tikarpada of Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary with scattered population between rocky crevices at an altitude 433 m.

The Isotypes of *Lophopogon kingii* are deposited at CAL (Accession no. 1408). Since the present collection is a recollection from Odisha State which is

other than the type locality after a lapse of more than a century, it is described and illustrated here.

***Lophopogon kingii* Hook.f.**, Fl. Brit. Ind. 7: 149. 1896; Haines, Bot. Bihar & Orissa: 1025. 1924; Bor, Grass. Burma, Ceylon, India & Pakistan: 190. 1960.

Annuals. Culms tufted, up to 35 cm high, silky tomentose at base. Leaves narrowly linear, 4-15 x 0.06-0.1 cm, acuminate at apex, incurved when mature, gradually smaller upwards and sheathing the peduncle; nodes glabrous; leaf sheath 2.5 - 4 cm long; base of the leaves and mouth of the sheaths softly villous; ligule a rim of white hairs. Inflorescence spatheolate, spatheous sheath narrowly lanceolate, 2.5-3 cm long, caudate to acuminate. Racemes 2, closely appressed together, 1.5-2 cm long, yellowish brown, exerted from spatheole, up to 6.5 cm long. Spikelets densely imbricate, fragile, lower glumes of the lowest spikelets closely nerved, with tufts of hair on the margins; lower sessile and upper 2 pedicelled spikelets, dissimilar, bisexual; sessile and pedicelled spikelets obovate - oblong, base of the joints and callus bearded with 1.5-2 mm long brown hairs. Sessile spikelets 4.2-4.5 mm long, lower glume oblong, 3.5-3.8 x 0.8-0.9 mm, truncate with two lateral blunt teeth and 2-3 shorter ones between them, narrowed at base, yellowish brown, prominently 7-9

nerved, tufts of hairs between nerves in the middle forms continuous transverse band, margins incurved, glabrous. Upper glume oblong - elliptic, awned, ca. 5.5 mm long, brown to yellow, 3- nerved, glabrous, margins broadly hyaline at the base, ciliate with long brown hairs on upper lateral sides, glabrous inside, awn as long as glume, barbellate. Florets 2, lower male or barren; upper bisexual. Lower lemma oblong - lanceolate, 4.1 x 0.9 mm, slightly two lobed, acute and hairy at apex, membranous, hyaline, nerveless. Upper lemma oblong - lanceolate ca. 4.4 mm long, faintly 1-nerved, glabrous below the middle, ciliate or pubescent above the middle, acute, awned between two acuminate scabrid lobes, awn geniculate, column ca. 4 mm long, twisted, margins sparsely barbellate; bristle ca. 9 mm long, barbellate. Palea rectangular, 2.2 x 1 mm, membranous, hyaline, nerveless, undulate at apex, ciliate, margins infolded. Pedicelled spikelets 5-6 mm long, pedicels densely brown hairy at base. Similar to sessile spikelets but upper glume 5-7 nerved with tufts of hairs, forming a continuous transverse band in the middle, awned, awn ca.10 mm long, upper lemma awn longer than the awn of upper lemma of sessile spikelet; sometimes awn reduced as short arista between two acuminate scabrid lobes. Stamens 2; filaments ca. 1.6 mm long; anthers ca. 2.1 mm long, light yellow. Style ca. 1.5 mm long; stigma plumose, up to 3 mm long, purple, exerted. Caryopsis narrow, ca. 1.8 mm long, oblique at base, tapering below, bulged above the middle.

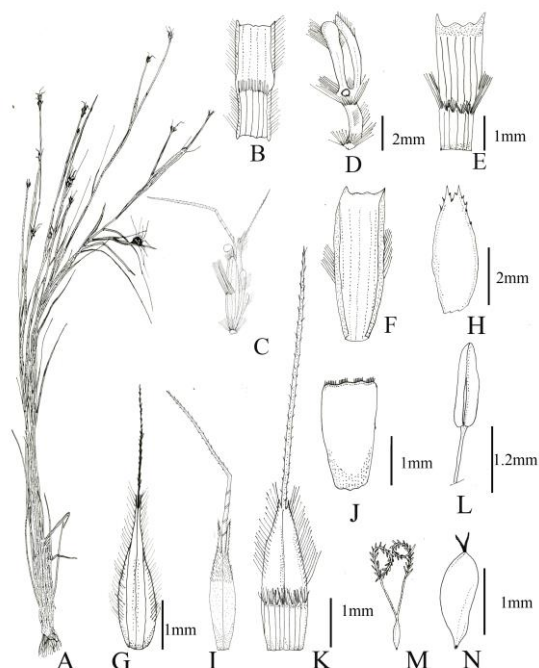


Figure: 1 *Lophopogon kingii* Hook.f. A. Habit; B. Ligule; C. Spikelet; D. Peduncle; E & F. Lower glume; G. Upper glume; H. Lower lemma; I. Upper lemma; J. Palea; K. Upper glume of Pedicelled spikelet; L. Stamen; M. Pistil & N. Caryopsis.

Flowering & Fruiting: September-October.

Habitat: Grows usually in the rocky crevices on hills in dry deciduous forests.

Distribution: Endemic. India: Monghyr, Bihar and now in Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary, Odisha.

Specimens examined: Odisha- Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary, 18.10.2015, Chandramohan 7061 (BSID).

GPS Co-ordinates: N. 20°35'268" E 084°47'355" at 433 msl.

Note: It is similar to *Lophopogon tridentatus* (Roxb.) Hack. but differs in having closely nerved lower glumes of the lowest spikelets, with tufts of hair on the margins, Upper glume of pedicelled spikelets 5-7 nerved with tufts of hairs, forming a continuous transverse band in the middle.

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