



Richardia L. (Rubiaceae) – A New Addition of Genera to the Flora of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

Apurba Kumar Das^{1*} and Chandrakasan Sivaperuman²

¹Zoological Survey of India, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair – 744 102

²Zoological Survey of India, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair – 744 102

Received: 07.03.2025 | Accepted: 09.03.2025 | Published: 17.03.2025

*Corresponding Author: Apurba Kumar Das¹

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.15037190](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15037190)

Abstract		Short Communications
<p>The flora of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is flourished with variety of species; a lot of species are still unknown from these islands. We are reporting <i>Richardia scabra</i> L. which is a small flowering plant (Angiosperm) belongs to family Rubiaceae, this genus till now unknown from these islands. From the Great Nicobar Island we collected this specimen and it represents the first record of this genus in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. A brief taxonomic description, color photographs and distribution map are provided.</p> <p>Keywords: Angiosperm, Rubiaceae, New record, Great Nicobar Island</p>		

INTRODUCTION:

The genus *Richardia* L. (Family: Rubiaceae) which comprises ca. 17 species in the world (Govaerts et al. 2013). The native range is tropical and subtropical America and introduced in Africa and Asia. In India, so far the genus *Richardia* is represented by only two species *R. scabra* L. and *R. brasiliensis* Gomes.

During a floristic survey at Great Nicobar Island, the authors collected a specimen from Campbell Bay Village opposite of INS Baaz (Fig.1) in its flowering and fruiting phase. Subsequently it's

confirmed as *Richardia scabra* L., commonly known as Rough Mexican Clover. Based on the available literature (Lewis and Oliver 1974; Lakshminarasimhan and Rao 1996; Hajra et al., 1999; Shina, 1999; Pandey and Diwakar 2008; Prasad et al., 2009; Panday et al. 2020; Das and Sivaperuman 2023) the genus is unknown for Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which is reported here. A thorough taxonomic description, phenology, distribution and color photographs are provided for its easy identification. The voucher specimens are deposited in Port Blair for future references.

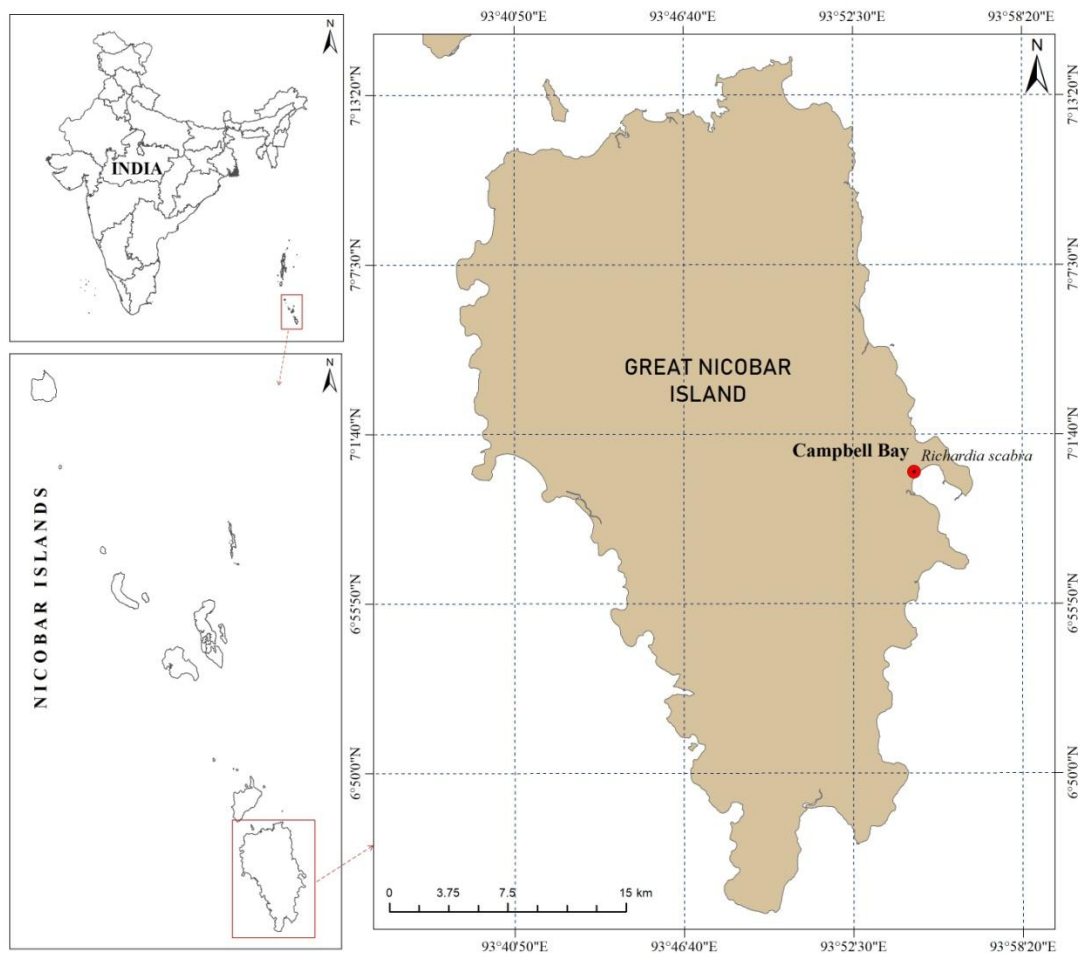


Fig. 1: Distribution of *Richardia scabra* L. in Campbell Bay, Great Nicobar Island.

TAXONOMIC TREATMENT:

Richardia scabra L. Sp. Pl. 330 1753, *Plethyrasis glauca* Raf. Autik. Bot. 13 1840, *Richardia cubensis* A. Rich. Hist. Fis. Cuba, Bot. 2: 31 1850, *Richardia pilosa* Ruiz & Pav. Fl. Peruv. 3: 50 1802, *Richardia procumbens* Sesse & Moc. Fl. Mexic. ed. 2: 83 1894, *Richardia scabra* var. *chacoensis* E.L. Cabral & Bacigalupo Brittonia 57: 133 2005, *Richardsonia cubensis* A. Rich. Hist. Fis. Cuba, Bot. 11: 31 1850, *Richardsonia pilosa* (Ruiz & Pav.) Kunth Nov. Gen. Sp. 3: 350 1819, *Richardsonia scabra* (L.) A. St.-Hil. Pl. Usuel. Bras. t. 8 1824, *Spermacoe hirsuta* Willd. ex Roem. & Schult. Syst. Veg. 3: 531 1818, *Spermacoe involucrate* Pursh Fl. Amer. Sept. 1: 105 1814.

Decumbent or suberect annual herbs, 20–60 cm long, branches subterete, hirsute. Leaves simple, opposite, ca. 2–4 × 0.6–2 cm, ovate to elliptic-

ovate, base attenuate or cuneate, apex acute or obtuse, scabrous on both sides, margin ciliate, stipule sheaths ca. 2–3 mm long, pilose, setae 2–5 mm long, petiole 5–10 mm long. Capitula many-flowered ca. 1 cm across, with 1–2 paired setiform bracts, usually broadly ovate, upper pair usually smaller, sessile. Calyx 1–2 mm long, truncate, scabrous, lobes 6, obovate, margin ciliate. Corolla white, occasionally tinged pink-lavender, funnel-shaped, glabrous inside, tube 4–8 mm, lobes 6, ca. 3 mm. Stamens 6, between the lobes. Ovary subglobose, 3-locular, stigma capitate, 3-lobed. Capsule 3-celled, densely scabrous, mericarps 3, ellipsoid, 2–3.5 mm long (Fig. 2).

Flowering & Fruiting: February–November.

Habitat: Annual herb which found growing in wasteland near to coastal plain.

Distribution: North and South America, India

(Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu and now from Nicobar Island), Africa, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Java, China, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Specimens examined: India: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Great Nicobar Island, Campbell Bay, 28th August 2021, *Apurba Kumar Das* 002633.

Location: Latitude: 7°0'23.09"N, Longitude: 93°55'1.75"E, Altitude: 4 m MSL.

Conservation Status: During our field visit at Great Nicobar Island in Campbell Village, we observed few patches near the coastal plain. *R. scabra* may be under risk due to human interruption, tourism and surroundings devastation as this region is not subject to protection. Hence, we propose the IUCN conservation status of *R. scabra* as Data Deficient for ANI (IUCN, 2025).

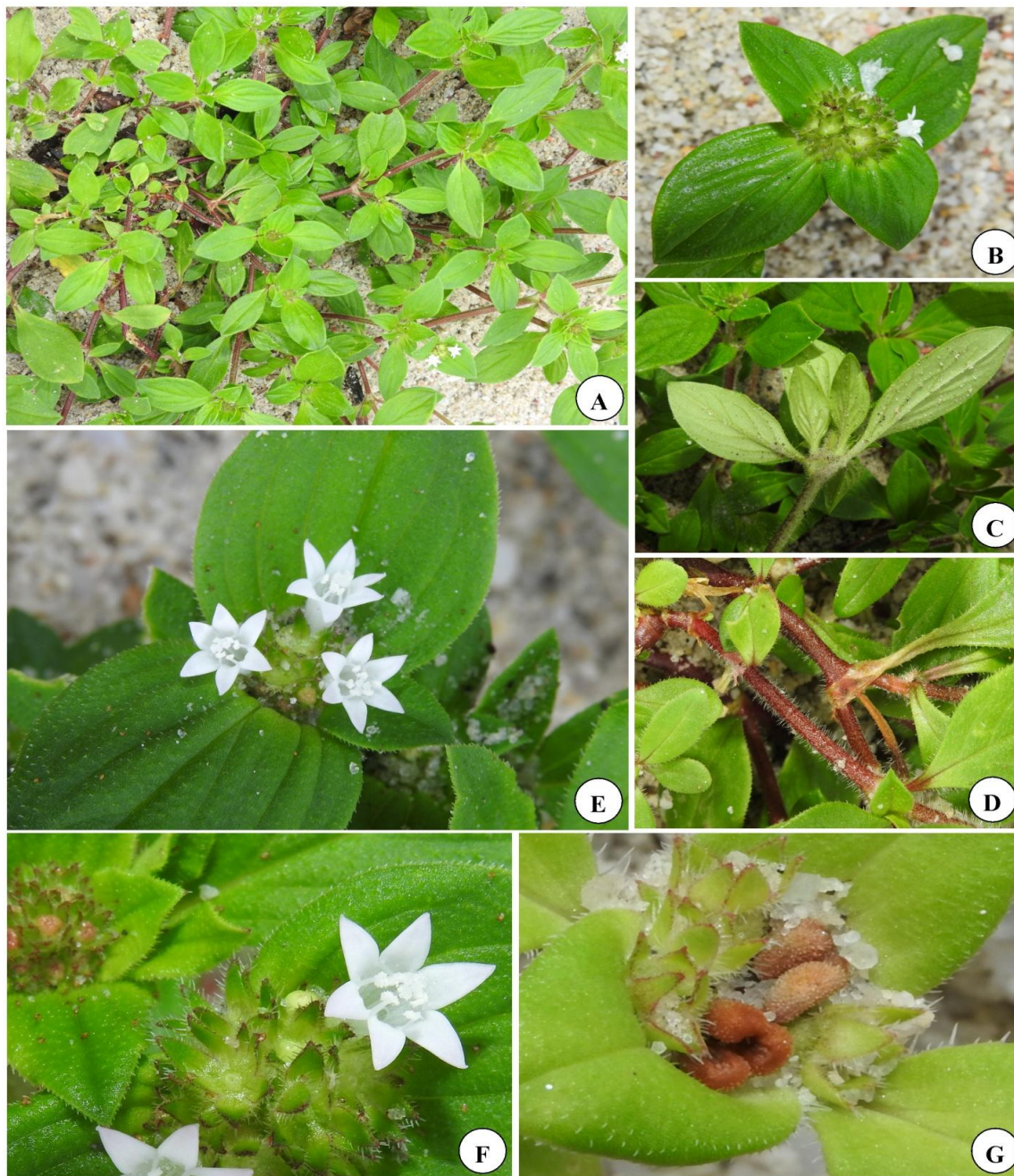


Fig. 2: *Richardia scabra* L. (Rubiaceae): A- Habit; B- Leaf blades; C- Dorsal leaf blade; D, Hirsute branches; E-

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The authors are thankful to Director, Zoological Survey of India, for providing the facilities and constant support. We also acknowledge Divisional Forest Officer, Nicobar Division, Campbell Bay, Great Nicobar Island for permitting to carry out the field survey.

REFERENCES

- Das, A.K. & Sivaperuman, C. (2023). Floral Diversity of the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. In *Faunal Ecology and Conservation of the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve*. Springer Nature, pp. 41-76.
- Govaerts, R., Ruhsam, M., Andersson, L., Robbrecht, E., Bridson, D.M., Davis, A.P., Schanzer, I. & Sonke, B. (2013). World Checklist of Rubiaceae. Facilitated by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Available at: <http://apps.kew.org/wcsp> (Accessed on 12th December 2023).
- Hajra, P.K., Rao, P.S.N. & Mudgal, V. (1999). (Eds.), *Flora of Andaman & Nicobar Islands*. Botanical Survey of India, Calcutta.
- Lakshminarasimhan, P. & Rao, P.S.N. (1996). Supplementary list of angiosperms recorded (1983-1993) from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. India. *Journal of Economic and Taxonomic Botany* 20: 175–185.
- Lewis, W.H. & Oliver, R.L. (1974). Revision of *Richardia* (Rubiaceae). *Brittonia* 26: 271–301.
- Panday, S., Sinha, B.K. & Karmakar, P. (2020). Thirty-three new additions to the flora of Mizoram, India. *Nelumbo* 62(2): 131–144.
- Pandey, R.P. & Diwakar, P.G. (2008). An integrated check-list Flora of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, India. *Journal of Economic and Taxonomic Botany* 32(2): 403–500.
- Prasad, P.R.C., Reddy, C.S., Lakshmi, R.K.V., Kumari, P.V. & Raza, S.H. (2009). Angiosperms of North Andaman, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. *Check List* 5(2): 254–269.
- Sinha, B.K. (1999). In Hajra, P.K. & Rao, P.S.N. (Eds.) *Flora of Great Nicobar Islands*. Botanical Survey of India, Calcutta.