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Research Article

Ceropegia andhrica (Apocynaceae), a new species from Andhra Pradesh, India

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A new hysteranthous species of *Ceropegia, C. andhrica* P.Chiranjeevi, K.Prasad & V.Nagaraju sp. nov. (Apocynaceae), is described from the Paderu forest division, Alluri Sitharamaraju District, Andhra Pradesh, India. It morphologically resembles *Ceropegia vemanae* and *C. ciliatior* in features such as the shape and size of tuber, pendulous flowers, reflexed corolla lobes and exposed gynostegium with corona, but differs in having branched or rarely unbranched stem, flowers 4–6 at a node, pedicels 4–10 mm long, sepals subulate or narrowly deltoid, corolla dark purple, densely hairy, lobes 3.4–6.0 mm long, ovate-triangular at base then gradually tapering above, interstaminal corona lobes shortly bilobed with triangular lobules, and staminal corona lobes narrowly oblong, 3-lobed at apex. A detailed description, photographs, and the conservation status of the new species are provided.

Keywords: Asclepiadoideae, Ceropegieae, Hysteranthous, Paderu forest division

Introduction

Ceropegia (Asclepiadoideae-Ceropegieae) is one of the largest genera in the family Apocynaceae and includes 461 species distributed from Africa to northeast Australia (POWO 2025). The genus displays enormous diversity both in vegetative and floral characters, and according to the synopsis by Bruyns et al. (2017), it comprises 717 species and 30 sections, including the highly succulent Stapeliads and species of *Brachystelma*. More recently, Endress et al. (2018) accepted the inclusion of *Brachystelma* in *Ceropegia*, but not the inclusion of the succulent stapeliads. The merging of *Brachystelma* into *Ceropegia* is also controversial and it is often retained as a separate entity from *Ceropegia*, as these genera exhibit distinctive floral morphologies. The genus *Brachystelma* (s.str.) can be differentiated by its rotate corolla, corolla base

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