

Short communication

A new record of *Nymphaea* (Nymphaeaceae) for Flora of Nepal

Bhakta B. Raskoti^{1*}, Rita Ale¹ and Ganga D. Bhatt²

¹Pokharathok 9, Arghakhanchi, Nepal; ²National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories Department of Plant Resources, Godawari, Lalitpur, Nepal

Abstract

Occurrence of *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* Willd. (Nymphaeaceae) in Nepal is reported. Detailed description, illustration and relevant notes are provided.

Key words: Hairy water lily, taxonomy, conservation status.

The genus *Nymphaea* comprises 50 species around the world and distributed in south East Asia (Dezhi *et al* 2001). *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* Willd. is known as hairy water lily and distributed in China, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam (Dezhi *et al* 2001).

There are two species of *Nymphaea* in Nepal, namely *Nymphaea nouchali* N.L. Burm. and *Nymphaea rubra* Roxb. ex Andrews distributed in the tropical region (Press *et al*. 2000; Rajbhandari and Bhatt 2011). *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* is not previously reported so far from Nepal (Hara *et al* 1978; Press *et al* 2000; Bista *et al* 2001). There is no record of herbarium specimen in the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories (KATH) and Tribhuvan University Central Herbarium (TUCH). In this study, *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* have been collected by the authors from the Banke District, of Mid-Western Nepal and the specimens are deposited at KATH. *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* is distinct in characters with other *Nymphaea* species having pubescence in the leaf petiole, flower pedicel and ventral surface of leaves. (Figures 1 & 2).

Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens (Willd.) Hook.f. & Thoms., Fl. Brit. India. 1: 114. 1872.

Nymphaea pubescens Willd., Sp. Pl. 2: 1154. 1799.

Perennial floating herbs. **Rhizomes** erect with slender stolons. **Leaf** papery, ovate-elliptic to orbicular, 8-15×5-15 cm, abaxial surface densely pubescent, peltate, base deeply cordate, margin dentate and teeth acute to subspinose. **Flower** emergent, red, 10 cm across. **Calyx** incorporated on receptacle circular; sepals oblong, 5-7×1.5-2 cm, veined, obtuse. **Petals** oblong, 6-7×1-1.5 cm, veined, subacute. Filament of inner stamens wider than anther. **Carpels** fused. **Stigma** rays, with linear appendages carpillary. **Fruit** ovoid to subglobose.

Flowering: October-November.

Habit and habitat: Open shallow ponds near roadsides, at an altitude of 160-300 meters.

Distribution: Nepal (Mid-western Nepal), Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, India, Myanmar, New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam.

Conservation status: Threatened due to habitat destruction, overexploitation for ornamental and religious use.

Note: The newly reported taxa is closely related to *Nymphaea rubra* but differs from the later by smaller leaf size and pubescens in the ventral surface of leaves and in the petiole.

*For correspondence,
e-mail: bbraskoti@gmail.com; tel: 977 1 5537055

Specimen examined: Mid-western Nepal, Banke District, Nepalgunj at altitude of about 160 m, Oct 22, 2010, Raskoti and Ale 210 (KATH).

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to the curator of the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories Godawari, Lalitpur (KATH) and Tribhuvan University Central Herbarium (TUCH) for allowing us to examine herbarium specimens.

References

- Bista M.S., Adhakari M.K. and Rajbhandari K.R. 2001. *Flowering Plants of Nepal (Phanerograms)*. Department of Plant Resources, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Dezhi F.U., Wiersema J.H. and Padgett D. 2001. *Flora of China*. Vol. 6. Missouri Botanical Garden Press, Missouri, USA.
- Hara H., Stearn W.T. and Williams L.H.J., eds. 1978. *An Enumeration of the Flowering Plants of Nepal*. British (Natural History) Museum, London, UK.
- Press J.R., Shrestha K.K. and Sutton D.A. 2000. *Annotated Checklist of the Flowering Plants of Nepal*. The Natural History Museum, London, UK.
- Rajbhandari K.R. and Bhatt G.D. 2011. Nymphaeaceae. In: *Catalogue of Nepalese Flowering Plants-II* (K.R. Rajbhandari, K.R. Bhattarai and S.R. Baral, eds.), pp 27-28. National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories, Lalipur, Nepal.

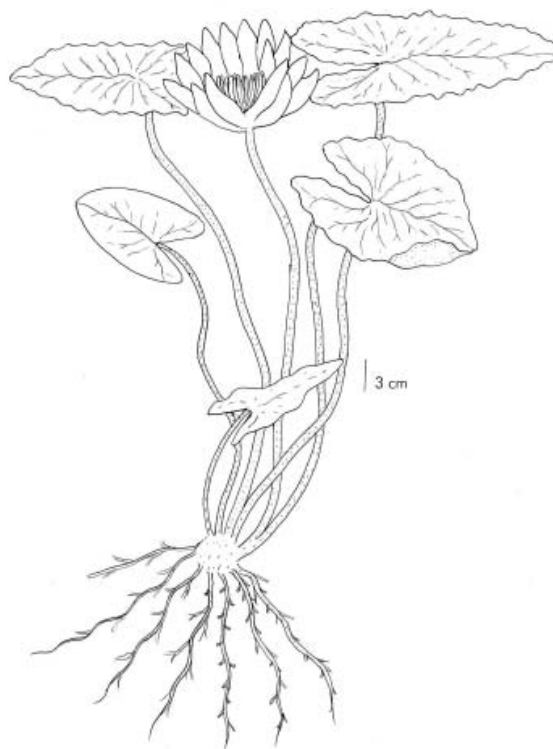


Figure 1. Flowering plant of *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens*.



Figure 2. *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens*: (a) habitat, (b) herbarium specimen, (c) hairy petiole, (d) hairy leaf.