

***PRISMATOMERIS FRAGRANS* E.T. GEDDES (RUBIACEAE)  
- A NEW RECORD FOR THE FLORA OF VIET NAM**

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*Prismatomeris* Thwaites is a small genus consisting of 15 species in the family Rubiaceae and is distributed throughout Asia (Mabberley, 2008; Chen and Taylor, 2011). In Viet Nam, the genus is represented by four species (Ho, 2000; Tran, 2005). While exploring the flora of HonBa Nature Reserve in Khan Hoa Province of the country, the authors came across an interesting specimen of *Prismatomeris* which, after critical examination and with help of relevant literature (Pitard, 1924; Ho, 2000; Tran, 2005; Chen and Taylor, 2011) and type specimens, identified as *P. fragrans* E.T. Geddes. This species was so far reported from North West Laos and Thailand, but never from Viet Nam. Hence, this is reported as a new distributional record for the flora of Viet Nam. A detailed description and colour photographs are provided for easy identification of the species.

***Prismatomeris fragrans*** E.T. Geddes, Bull. Misc. Inform. Kew 1927(4): 173 (1927); Craib in Fl. Siam. En. 2(2): 182 (1934); Johansson, Opera Bot. 94: 42 (1987). **(Fig. 1).**

Medium-sized tree, up to 12 m high. Bark grey, texture rough. Leaf blades coriaceous, obovate to elliptic, 6–15 × 2–5 cm, base cuneate, apex acute to acuminate, glabrous, margin entire; lateral veins 6–12 pairs; petioles 1–3 cm long; stipules caducous, 2–4 mm long. Inflorescence umbellate, 1–7 flowered. Flowers fragrant, pentamerous; pedicels 1.5–4 cm long. Calyx shortly denticulate, tube 3–4 mm long, teeth c. 1 mm long, with tufts of straight hairs up to 0.4 mm long. Corolla white, thick; tube 1.5–2.0 cm long and c. 2 cm in diameter; lobes recurved at maturity, about as long as the tube. Stamens included, inserted in the upper third to upper half of the corolla tube; filaments c. 0.5–2.5 mm long; anthers c. 4–5 mm long. Ovary up to 1 mm long, glabrous; style 7(–14) mm long, stigmas 3(–5) mm long. Drupe green, shiny black when mature, subglobose, c. 1 cm in diameter.

*Flowering period:* April. *Fruiting period:* May to June.

*Specimens examined:* **Viet Nam:** Khanh Hoa Province; Hon Ba Nature Reserve, 9 Apr 2011, J. Lee *et al.* HIKK-008; *l.c.*, You-Mi, Lee *et al.*, 10 Apr 2011, HIKK-254; HIKK-371 (HN, KRIB). **Thailand:** Chon Buri (Si Racha, Ban Dan, lectotype: *Marcan* 1381, K-Photo!, BM), Rayong, Chanthaburi.

*Distribution:* North-West Laos, Thailand (Puff *et al.*, 2005), and Viet Nam.

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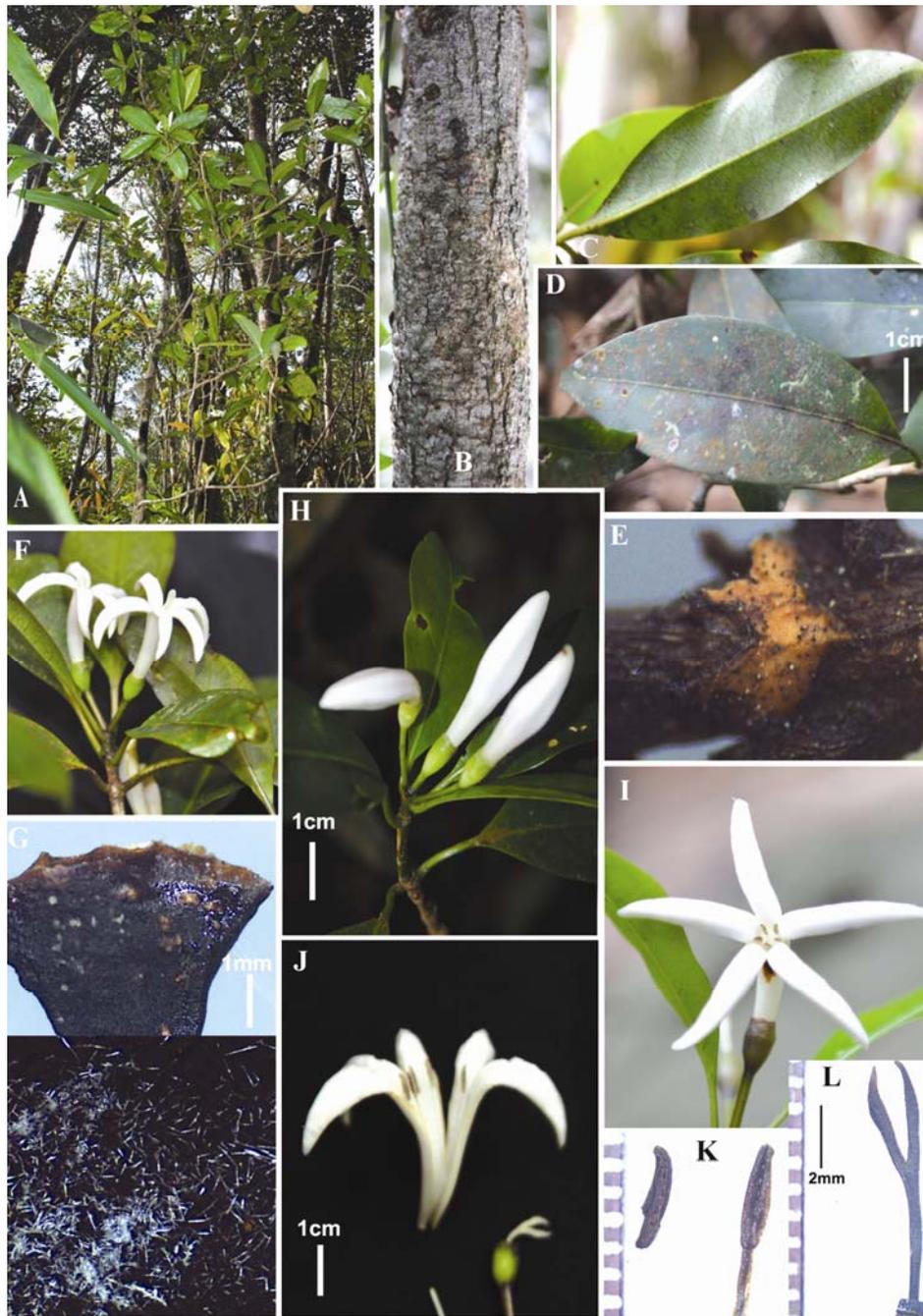


Fig. 1. *Pristomeris fragrans* E.T. Geddes A. Habit; B. Bark; C, D. Abaxial and adaxial portion of leaf; E. Stipules; F. Inflorescence; G. Calyx (top) with tufts of straight hairs (bottom); H. Flower buds; I. Corolla lobes; J. Corolla tube; K. Anther and filament; L. Ovary, style and stigma.

*Habitat:* Exposed hillocks (800–1000 m above sea level); semi-evergreen forests.

*Note:* *Prismatomeris fragrans* is morphologically close to *P. memecyloides* Craib and *P. filamentosa* Craib by its distinctly pedicellate flowers, but different in having denticulate calyx with tuft of hairs.

*Uses:* The plant is also known for its medicinal properties. In Thailand, decoction of root is traditionally used by the ethnic communities to cure kidney dysfunctions (Wongsatit *et al.*, 2002). Moreover, potential antimalarial, antifungal and anti-tuberculosis bio-chemicals have also been isolated from the plant (Kanokmedhakul *et al.*, 2005).

*Conservation status:* Authors could observe only 10–15 individuals growing well within the reaches of Hon Ba Nature Reserve of Viet Nam. They were under the close monitoring of forest officials and hence, no immediate threat to the population could be seen. In Thailand, the plant has been reported from the northern, north-eastern, eastern and south eastern areas (Puff *et al.*, 2005). In Laos, it is known only from the north-western part. However, quantitative population data of this taxon could not be found, preventing assessment under any specific criteria. Therefore, we recommend this to be kept under Data Deficient (DD) category of IUCN Red List (IUCN, 2012).

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