

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

State Flower: Fox-tail Orchid.

Botanical Name: *Rhynchostylis retusa* L.

Family: Orchidaceae.

Vernacular Name: Kopou Phool.

Common Name: Fox-tail Orchid.

Etymology: The generic name, **Rhynchostylis** is derived from Greek word, **rhynchos** (= beak) and **stylos** (= column), meaning beaked-columns in flowers, specific epithet **retusa**' comes from Latin **retusus** ', infers to rounded or obtuse lip with retuse-tipped.



Rhynchostylis retusa L.

Description: Epiphytic herb with stems closely enclosed by leaf sheaths. Leaves broadly oblong, ca 30 cm long, unequally bilobed at apex. Inflorescences racemose, cylindrical, pendulous, dense-flowered, with 20 - 30 cm long rachises appear like a fox-tail. Flowers with sepals and petals white or pink, splashed deep purple; dorsal sepals elliptic; lateral sepals oblique, base adnate to column; lip spatulate, apiculate and retuse at apex, purplish; spur laterally compressed, white; column straight, white; pollinia globose; ovary to 1.5 cm long, pink-white.

Flowering: April - September; **Fruiting:** December - May.

Distribution: India, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. In India, it is distributed in North-eastern states, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha and Tamil Nadu.

Economic Importance: The flowers are in great demand in horticulture and orchid trade. It has become highly vulnerable due to its great ornamental value and the plant is dwindling in its natural habitats.

Traditional Uses: The leaf paste is used as an antiseptic and applied on wounds and bruises. Juice of leaves and aerial roots is used in treating earache. The flowers are popular during the spring festival "Rangali Bihu" and regarded as the symbol of love, fertility and joy.

Medicinal Uses: The plant is used in treatment of rheumatic pains, malaria, dysentery, epilepsy and menstrual disorders. It has antifungal and cytotoxic properties.

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