

LENTIBULARIACEAE

Utricularia graminifolia Vahl [= *Utricularia pedicellata* Wight; *U. uliginoides* Wight; *U. conferta* Wight; *U. equiseticaulis* Blatter & McCann; *U. caerulea* var. *graminifolia* (Vahl) P.K. Bhattach.]



Utricularia graminifolia Vahl

Courtesy: N.V. Malpure

Description: Herbs; rhizoids up to 2.5 cm long, c 0.3 mm thick, numerous, glandular, tapering towards apex, branches up to 2.5 mm long, papillose; stolons up to 10 cm long, c 0.5 mm thick, profusely branched, glandular. Foliar organs up to 10 x 1.5 cm, linear to strap-shaped, at base of scape and on stolons, 3-nerved, nerves branched further, rounded to obtuse or rarely retuse at apex. Traps 1-3 mm across, subglobose, slightly compressed, subdimorphic, numerous on vegetative organs; those on leaves sessile or subsessile, elsewhere long-stalked; mouth basal; appendages 2, subulate, simple, glandular. Racemes up to 30 cm long, 1-1.5 mm thick, erect, rarely branched, 1-9-flowered; scales 1-2 x 0.9-1.2 mm, basifixed, ovate to lanceate, rarely deltoid, 1- or 3-nerved, or nerves altogether absent, acute to acuminate at apex; bracts 1.5-2.5 x 1-1.5 mm, basifixed, ovate to lanceate, 1- or 3-nerved, acute to acuminate at apex; bracteoles 1-2.5 mm long, basifixed, subulate, 1-nerved; sterile bracts and bracteoles rarely seen among fertile ones; flowers 7-12 mm long; pedicels up to 11 mm long, erect, slightly winged. Calyx-lobes ovate to lanceate; upper lobes 3-6 x 2-3.5 mm, acuminate or rarely caudate at apex; lower 2.5-5.8 x 1.5-3 mm, 2-4-dentate at apex. Corolla blue to violet or

pink; upper lip 4-6.5 x 2-3.5 mm, linear-oblong, longitudinally streaked, crested at centre, ciliate along lower margin, truncate, rounded or obtuse at apex; lower lip 4-7 x 3-7 mm, obovate, rarely orbicular, hairy in throat, bigibbous at base, obscurely 3-lobed, rounded or retuse at apex; spur 4.5-7 mm long, curved, conical, acute at apex. Stamens 1.5-2 mm long; filaments strap-shaped; anther thecae distinct. Pistil 1.5-2 mm long; ovary ovoid, compressed; style short; stigma 2-lipped, upper lip semi-orbicular, lower truncate and hairy. Capsules 3-4 mm long, ovoid, thickened along dehiscent margin; placenta 1.6-2.5 x 1-1.5 mm, oblongoid or ovoid, compressed. Seeds 0.2-0.4 mm across, subglobose to obovoid; hilum terminal, prominent; testa cells reticulate.

Fl. & Fr.: Throughout the year.

Habitat: In marshy places, near perennial water sources and water-falls in hilly areas, among grasses and on soil covered rocks, from 400 m upwards.

Pollen: 4- or 5-colporate, 30-33 x 25-28 μ or 27-28 x 31-32 μ (Thanikaimoni, 1966); 4- or 5-colporate, 24 x 28 μ (Taylor, 1989).

Distribution: Southern India, Sri Lanka, China, Burma and Thailand; in India distributed in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, along W. Ghats, Madhya Pradesh in Central India and Andhra Pradesh in E. Ghats.

Notes: A highly variable species; several separate taxa have been recognised in the past. There may not be any difficulty in separating extreme forms but with a large series of specimens One finds an almost imperceptible gradation. It is considered necessary to reduce *U. equiseticaulis* Blatter & McCann, an extreme form wherein the fruiting calyx-lobes and seeds appear quite distinct, to *U. graminifolia* Vahl, as done by Sundararaghavan & al. (1970).

References:

Janarthanam, M.K. & Henry, A.N. 1992. Bladderworts of India. Pp. 57-61.

Sundararaghavan, R., Wadhwa, B.M. & Ansari, M.Y. 1970. On the identity of *Utricularia equiseticaulis* Blatt. & McCann. *Indian Forester* 96: 503-505.

Taylor, P. 1989. The genus *Utricularia* – a taxonomic monograph. *Kew Bull. Add. Ser.* 14: 1-724.

Thanikaimoni, G. 1966. Pollen morphology of the genus *Utricularia*. *Pollen et Spores* 8: 265-284.