

# New species of milkweed family found in Mount Emei

June 3 2021, by Zhang Nannan

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Flowering branch of *Vincetoxicum emeiense*. Credit: SHEN Jianyong

*Vincetoxicum* is a genus of the milkweed family (Apocynaceae) which comprises 378 genera and about 5,350 species. Species of *Vincetoxicum* are shrubs, erect perennial herbs or herbaceous twiners. There are

approximately 70 species of *Vincetoxicum* occurring in China, most of them are distributed in tropical or subtropical regions.

During an expedition to Mount Emei, researchers from the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden (XTBG) and their collaborators collected an unknown [species](#) of *Vincetoxicum* in May 2020 from the evergreen broad-leaved forest in Emeishan City. After literature review as well as morphological examination, they found it different from any other species of *Vincetoxicum* in morphological characters and confirmed it as new to science.

The researchers named the [new species](#) *Vincetoxicum emeiense* and got it published in *Phytotaxa*.

*Vincetoxicum emeiense* is a twining plant. It is similar to *V. hui* and *V. koi*. in twining herbaceous life form, leaf, pleiochasium and corolla shape, but there are numerous features that can be used to distinguish them.

*Vincetoxicum emeiense* has glabrous stem and adaxially puberulent leaf shape, and with adaxially puberulent and orange to purple corolla.

The new species is so far only recorded from the type locality, Mount Emei, Sichuan Province at an elevation of about 757 meters, where it grows in evergreen broad-leaved forest.



Corolla lobes of *Vincetoxicum emeiense*. Credit: SHEN Jianyong



Flowering branch of *Vincetoxicum emeiense*. Credit: SHEN Jianyong



Inflorescence of *Vincetoxicum emeiense*. Credit: SHEN Jianyong

Since the investigation has not been thorough enough to fully understand the species natural distribution, the researchers regarded the conservation status of the new species as Data Deficient according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List categories and criteria.

**More information:** SI-YUAN ZENG et al, *Vincetoxicum emeiense* (Asclepiadeae, Asclepiadoideae, Apocynaceae), a new species from Sichuan, China, *Phytotaxa* (2021). [DOI: 10.11646/phytotaxa.505.1.3](https://doi.org/10.11646/phytotaxa.505.1.3)

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