

New stoloniferous species of begonia found in Yunnan

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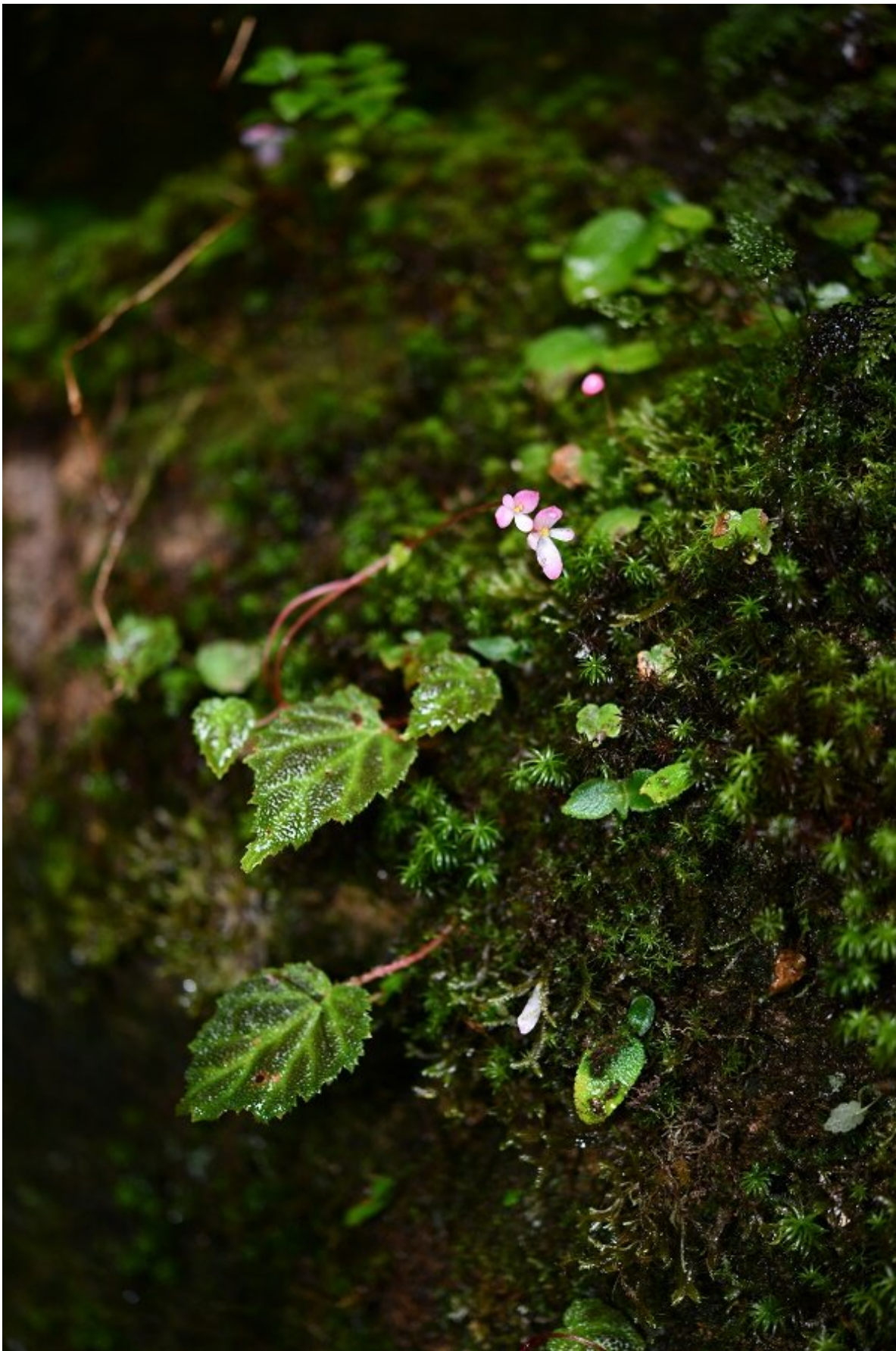
Begonia cangyuanensis. Credit: Ding Hongbo

Begonias are among the largest and fastest-growing genera of flowering plants. Yunnan Province in China and its neighboring countries (Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar) are recognized as one of the richest areas

for begonia diversity.

During a botanical surveys of the China-Myanmar transboundary region in Yunnan in 2022, researchers from the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden (XTBG) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences collected an unknown begonia species from the Nangunhe National Nature Reserve in Cangyuan Va Autonomous County. The tuberous habit with stolons between the tubers revealed that the [new species](#) is a member of Begonia sect. Stolonifera.

After careful taxonomic studies of the genus and comparison of the unknown species with similar species, the researchers confirmed it as a new species of begonia. They named it as *Begonia cangyuanensis* to refer to the distribution of the new species in Cangyuan Va Autonomous County, Yunnan Province, and published it in the *Nordic Journal of Botany*.



Begonia cangyuanensis. Credit: Ding Hongbo

Begonia cangyuanensis is a tuberous and creeping herb. It is stoloniferous, deciduous, about 5–20 cm high. The new species is similar to *B. dioica* in its tuberous habit with red stolons between the tubers, but significantly differs in having two bracteoles under the ovary (versus absent) and four tepals of the female flower (versus three tepals). It is also similar to *B. yui* in having two bracteoles below the ovary, but it is clearly distinguished by its tuberous habit with red stolons between tubers (versus absent) and four tepals of the female flower (versus five tepals).

The new species is endemic to Cangyuan, Yunnan. It was found growing in moist mossy areas on steep rocky slopes. Due to insufficient field surveys, the natural distribution and population status of *B. cangyuanensis* is not clear. Therefore, the researchers assessed the conservation status of the new species as data deficient according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature red list categories.

More information: Hong-Bo Ding et al, A new stoloniferous species of *Begonia* Begoniaceae from Yunnan, China, *Nordic Journal of Botany* (2023). [DOI: 10.1111/njb.03890](https://doi.org/10.1111/njb.03890)

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