

A new species of milkweed subfamily found in Yunnan

15 September 2020, by Zhang Nannan



Inflorescence of *Hoya gaoligongensis*. Credit: TAN Yunhong

Hoya is a genus in the Asclepiadoideae, the milkweed subfamily of the flowering-plant family Apocynaceae. In the past decade, 15 new *Hoya* were reported in China. Together with the newly reported species and those recorded in the Flora of China, there are approximately 47 species and one variety of *Hoya* currently recognized in China.

During an expedition to survey the [vascular plants](#) of Longling Xiaoheshan Nature Reserve, Yunnan Province in southwest China, researchers encountered a unique *Hoya* in bloom.

"After carefully studying the living plants and specimens, and comparing with all available literature and herbarium resources, we confirmed that the [species](#) was distinct from any described species," said Tan Yunhong from the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden (XTBG).

The researchers named the new species as *Hoya gaoligongensis* and got it published in *Phytotaxa*.

Hoya gaoligongensis is an epiphytic climbing liana, with milky latex in all parts. Its stems are often with adventitious roots, glabrescent, and the leaves are opposite. The blades are thick, rigid-coriaceous, oblong, long-oblongate or spatulate.

Hoya gaoligongensis is similar to *H. yunnanensis* and *H. globulosa*, but can be clearly distinguished from the two species by its leaf and floral characters. Compared to the latter two species, *H. gaoligongensis* has narrower long oblongate leaves, much smaller lateral vein branching angles, and inconspicuous lateral veins.



Habitat of *Hoya gaoligongensis*. Credit: TAN Yunhong

Although the corolla is similar in all three species, the relative positions of outer and inner corona lobe processes serve as a key character distinguishing these species.

Hoya gaoligongensis is known from Longling, Gongshan, and Deqin, W/NW Yunnan Province, an epiphytic liana growing on the surface of giant trees in mid-elevation (2000–2400 m), moist, evergreen, broadleaved forest. Its conservation status is

recognized as vulnerable.

More information: Zhao et al.

***Hoya gaoligongensis* (Apocynaceae,
Asclepiadoideae), a new species from Yunnan,
SW China**

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