

Researchers find new distinct species in Chaozhou, Guangdong Province

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In April 2019, researchers from the South China Botanical Garden (SCBG) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences conducted an investigation in Chaozhou, Guangdong Province, and they introduced several plants to

SCBG for cultivation. After months of cultivation, they finally blossomed and fruited in December 2019.

Based on the comprehensive morphological characteristics and molecular experimental evidence, researchers finally determined that this is a unique new species of the family Lamiaceae, and named it *Caryopteris alternifolia*.

Lamiaceae is a large family distributed worldwide, with about 236 genera and 7,180 species. There are more than 970 species of 96 genera of Lamiaceae in China. At present, there are seven species in the world, all of them can be found in China.

According to previous records, there is only one species of the genus in Guangdong. *Caryopteris alternifolia* is the second species of Lamiaceae with alternate leaves in China, which is unique. It is only found in Chaozhou, Guangdong Province, and is endemic to Guangdong Province.

At present, only two populations have been found, and the number of mature individuals is less than 250. According to International Union for Conservation of Nature red list categories and criteria, it can be listed as endangered, which belongs to the typical plants species with Extremely Small Population (PSESP).

This species has been successfully introduced into SCBG, but its endangered reason needs further study. The related research was completed by Chen Yousheng from SCBG and Xiang Chunlei from the Kunming Institute of Botany.

More information: You-Sheng Chen et al. *Caryopteris alternifolia* (Ajugoideae, Lamiaceae), a distinct new species from Guangdong, China. *Phytotaxa*. DOI: doi.org/10.11646/phytotaxa.461.1.8

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