

Brief Communication

***Korthalsella japonica* (VISCACEAE): NEW RECORD FOR THE
NEPAL HIMALAYAS**

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ABSTRACT

Korthalsella japonica (Thunb.) Engler (Viscaceae) mistletoe is reported as a new record for the Nepal Himalayas.

Key words: *Korthalsella japonica*, Viscaceae, mistletoe, Nepal Himalayas.

INTRODUCTION

In a recent study between Naubise, Dhading District and Bhainse Dobhan, Makawanpur District, along the Tribhuvan Highway in the Central Nepal Himalayas, mistletoe *Korthalsella japonica* (Thunb.) Engler (Viscaceae) has been recorded for the first time from Nepal. The mistletoe was collected from *Quercus semecarpifolia* Sm. along the Tribhuvan Highway at Daman (2,350 m), Makawanpur District.

Korthalsella Japonica (Thunb.) Engler in Engler and Prantl, Nat. Pflanzenfam., Nachtr. 1:138. 1897.

Small holoparasite, up to 15 cm tall. Branches are opposite with internodes of various lengths, flat, obovate or oblanceolate, 5-15 x 3-6 mm, and single ribbed when dried. Leaves are very small (reduced) arranged in a ring. Inflorescence lateral at nodes. Male flowers greenish, globose,

triangular lobes, 0.5 mm long, synandrium flat topped. Female flowers sessile, with small calyx lobes, mostly ovoid in bud, 4-6 mm, triangular lobes, minute. Fruit a berry, obovoid, pale yellow, small, ca. 2 x 1.3 mm.

Flowering: November

Fruiting: December

Distribution: China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Himalayas

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Key identifying characters of the genus

***Korthalsella*:** Stem internodes flattened; scale leaves in two ranks; flowers subtended by hairs; anthers fused into synandrium – these are the key characters which make this genus distinct from other genera found in Nepal within the family Viscaceae.

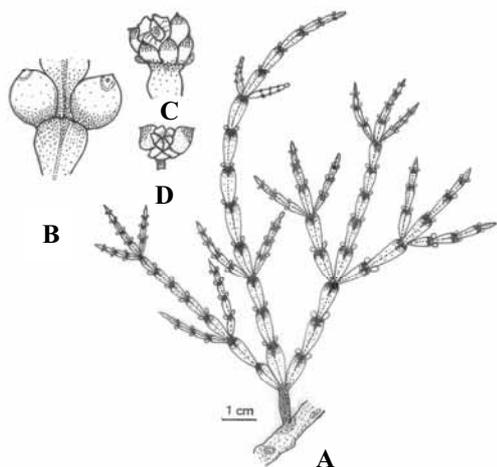


Fig. 1. *Korthalsella japonica* (Thunb.) Engler; (A) habit of the plant, (B) mature fruits, (C) female flowers with buds, (D) male flowers.

The collected specimen were compared with Hara *et al.* (1982), Press *et al.* (2000) and Bista *et al.* (2001) but none of these publications have listed this mistletoe species from Nepal. Herbarium specimens deposited at the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories, Kathmandu (KATH) were checked and found that there are no identified specimens of *Korthalsella japonica* deposited. We compared the collected specimen with Huasing and Gilbert (2003) and Danser (1937) and identified it as *Korthalsella japonica* (Thunb.) Engler. We confirmed this specimen as a new record for the Nepal Himalayas.

Hara *et al.* (1982) have reported three species of mistletoes belonging to two genera in the family Viscaceae from Nepal. The same numbers of Viscaceae mistletoes have been confirmed by Press *et al.* (2000) and Bista *et al.* (2001). Addition of two Viscaceae mistletoe species by Devkota and Glatzel (2005) and one by Devkota and Koirala (2005) as new records to Nepal Himalayas have increased the total number of Viscaceae mistletoes to six species in two genera. Present record of *Korthalsella japonica* (Thunb.) Engler for the first time from the Nepal Himalayas has increased the

total number of Viscaceae mistletoes to seven species in three genera.

VAUCHER SPECIMEN

Nepal; Makawanpur District, Daman, 2,350 m, 4 November 2007. M.P. Devkota and G.P. Joshi CNO 1281 (KATH). Parasitic on *Quercus semecarpifolia* Sm. in Oak-Rhododendron forest.

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