Short communication

A new record of *Nymphaea* (Nymphaeaceae) for Flora of Nepal

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Abstract

Occurrence of *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* Willd. (Nymphaeaceae) in Nepal is reported. Detailed description, illustration and relevant notes are provided.

Key words: Hairy water lily, taxonomy, conservation status.

The genus *Nymphaea* comprises 50 species around the world and distributed in south East Asia (Dezhi *et al* 2001). *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* Willd. is known as hairy water lily and distributed in China, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam (Dezhi *et al* 2001).

There are two species of *Nymphaea* in Nepal, namely *Nymphaea nouchali* N.L. Burm. and *Nymphaea rubra* Roxb. ex Andrews distributed in the tropical region (Press *et al*. 2000; Rajbhandari and Bhatt 2011). *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* is not previously reported so far from Nepal (Hara *et al* 1978; Press *et al* 2000; Bista *et al* 2001). There is no record of herbarium specimen in the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories (KATH) and Tribhuvan University Central Herbarium (TUCH). In this study, *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* have been collected by the authors from the Banke District, of Mid-Western Nepal and the specimens are deposited at KATH. *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens* is distinct in characters with other *Nymphaea* species having pubescence in the leaf petiole, flower pedicel and ventral surface of leaves. (Figures 1 & 2).


Perennial floating herbs. *Rhizomes* erect with slender stolons. *Leaves* papery, ovate-elliptic to orbicular, 8-15× 5-15 cm, abaxial surface densely pubescent, peltate, base deeply cordate, margin dentate and teeth acute to subspinose. *Flower* emergent, red, 10 cm across. *Calyx* incorporated on receptacle circular; sepals oblong, 5-7×1.5-2 cm, veined, obtuse. *Petals* oblong, 6-7×1-1.5 cm, veined, subacute. Filament of inner stamens wider than anther. *Carpels* fused. *Stigma* rays, with linear appendages carpellary. *Fruit* ovoid to subglobose.

**Flowering:** October-November.

**Habit and habitat:** Open shallow ponds near roadsides, at an altitude of 160-300 meters.

**Distribution:** Nepal (Mid-western Nepal), Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, India, Myanmar, New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam.

**Conservation status:** Threatened due to habitat destruction, overexploitation for ornamental and religious use.

**Note:** The newly reported taxa is closely related to *Nymphaea rubra* but differs from the later by smaller leaf size and pubescens in the ventral surface of leaves and in the petiole.

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**Specimen examined:** Mid-western Nepal, Banke District, Nepalgunj at altitude of about 160 m, Oct 22, 2010, Raskoti and Ale 210 (KATH).

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**References**


**Figure 1.** Flowering plant of *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens.*
Figure 2. *Nymphaea lotus* var. *pubescens*: (a) habitat, (b) herbarium specimen, (c) hairy petiole, (d) hairy leaf.