

## *Pseuderanthemum Maculatum* (G. Lodd.) I.M. Turner- new distributional record for Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

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### Abstract

*Pseuderanthemum maculatum* (G. Lodd.) I.M. Turner, a species of the Acanthaceae family, has been identified for the first time in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Known for its ornamental foliage and native to the Pacific Islands, this plant is commonly used in landscaping across tropical regions. This study documents its occurrence in the Andaman ecosystem, evaluates its ecological implications, and provides morphological descriptions and habitat notes. The finding raises biogeographical and conservation questions pertinent to plant migration and introduction across oceanic islands.

**Keywords:** New record, Acanthaceae, Spotted *Pseuderanthemum*, biodiversity

### Introduction

*Pseuderanthemum* Radlk. is a genus of acanthus family represented by 133 species and native to tropics and subtropics (POWO, 2025)? The genus is represented by nine species including 04 cultivated species in India. The ANI is renowned for their natural beauty and remarkable biodiversity, which includes a variety of endemic and indigenous plants and animals. The ANI are recognized as a rich and unique phytogeographical region with high endemism in India and consist of two groups of islands (Andaman group and Nicobar group of Islands) with 572 islands (Singh *et al.*, 2014, 2021) where the distribution of genus *Pseuderanthemum* Radlk. is represented by only one species i.e., *Pseuderanthemum album* (Roxb.) Merr.

During floristic explorations in Andaman group of Islands, specimens of *Pseuderanthemum* Radlk. (Acanthaceae) were collected, after critical examination of those was identified as *Pseuderanthemum maculatum* (G. Lodd.) I.M. Turner. Perusal of relevant literature (Murugan *et al.*, 2016; Pandey & Diwakar, 2008; Singh *et al.*, 2014 & 2021) revealed that the species has not been reported from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, hence it forms new distributional record for the same. Short Description, photographs and notes have been provided.

### Materials and Methods

To verify the identity of the specimen, critical analysis of morphological characters was carried out by comparing our collections with the herbarium specimens from Indian herbaria, online taxonomic databases and digital herbaria (POWO 2025; JSTOR 2025; The Herbarium Catalogue 2025) relevant taxonomic literature was also consulted. Field photographs of the species are provided for easy identification. Specimens are processed and made into herbarium followed by standard methodology (Jain and Rao, 1977).

### Taxonomic treatment

*Pseuderanthemum maculatum* (G.Lodd.) I.M. Turner. Taxon 65: 1134 (2016) (Fig.-1)

### Description

An erect, glabrous shrub growing up to 1.5 m tall. Leaves opposite, ovate to elliptic, 8–15 cm long, variegated with green, yellow, and sometimes purplish hues, margins entire, Petioles short or nearly absent. Inflorescences terminal or axillary spikes or racemes. Flowers 1–2 cm, zygomorphic and bilabiate, pink to white deeper pink at flower throat in colour. Calyx lobes 5, fused at the base. Corolla tubular with five lobes, irregularly shaped. Stamens 2, didynamous, inserted on the corolla tube. Ovary with 2 ovules in each locule. Capsule clavate 4-8 seeded; seeds flattened.

**Flowering & Fruiting:** June to January

**Habitat and ecology:** It grow near sea beach and adjoining forest areas at the end of Monsoon.

**Distribution:** India: Andaman and Nicobar Islands (from present study), South Andaman, Corbyn coves, 26.12.2024, RMK 00182.



**Fig. 1-** *Pseuderanthemum maculatum* (G. Lodd.) I.M. Turner

The first record of *Pseuderanthemum maculatum* (G. Lodd.) I.M. Turner in the Islands ecosystem could indicate accidental or deliberate introduction via the horticultural trade. The ecological plasticity of the species makes it a potential candidate for naturalization, raising concerns about displacement of native undergrowth species. Presently limited in spread, early documentation of such species plays a critical role in biodiversity monitoring and management, especially in ecologically sensitive island ecosystems. Further studies are necessary to examine its reproductive biology, pollinator interaction, seed dispersal mechanisms, and invasive potential. Monitoring its spread is crucial to assess its long-term impact on island biodiversity.

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