

**WEDELIA TRILOBATA (L.) A.S. HITCHC. (ASTERACEAE) - A NEW RECORD FOR BANGLADESH**

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A specimen of *Wedelia* Jacq., belonging to the family Asteraceae, was found and collected by the second author from Gulshan area of Dhaka city in July 2003, which was subsequently grown for flowering in the Dhaka University Botanic Garden and also in the Jahangirnagar University Botanic Garden. After thorough taxonomic investigation, the specimen has been identified as *Wedelia trilobata* (L.) A.S. Hitchc., a native of Central America, now widely distributed in the tropics.

This species has been found as an ornamental herb grown in the islands of Dhaka city streets and in the private gardens. Very likely this species is an escape from these gardens and now flourishing rapidly within the city area.

Since *Wedelia trilobata* (L.) A.S. Hitchc. was not reported earlier from the present Bangladesh territory by any of the previous workers, viz. Hooker (1881), Prain (1903), Heinig (1925), Raizada (1941), Sinclair (1955), Hossain (1966), Hossain and Khan (1993) and Khan (1992), this is being recorded here for the first time for Bangladesh.

A detailed taxonomic description and illustration of the plant are given below, based on the living specimens maintained by the authors.

**Wedelia trilobata** (L.) A.S. Hitchc. in Rep. Missouri Bot. Gard. 4: 99 (1898); Sivarajan & Pradeep in Ind. J. For. 11: 161-162 (1988); Hajra, Rao, Singh and Unigal (ed), Fl. Ind. 12: 426 (1995). *Silphium trilobatum* L., Syst. ed. 10: 1232 (1759). **(Fig. 1)**

Creeping, mat-forming perennial herb; stems rooting at the nodes, cylindrical, much-branched, procumbent, coarsely strigose to spreading hirsute or subglabrous, reaching up to 30 cm or more. Leaves shortly petiolate, opposite-decussate, ovate-dentate or 3-lobed, irregularly toothed or serrate, usually with a pair of lateral lobes, fleshy, strigose on both surfaces, 4-7 cm long and 1.5-2.5 cm wide. Capitula heterogamous, rayed, solitary on 3-10 cm long peduncles. Involucre campanulate, hemispherical; bracts 2-seriate, outer 1.0-1.2 cm long and 0.4-0.5 cm broad, ovate-lanceolate, chuffy, rigid, often recurved and exceeding the disk; inner shorter, lanceolate; receptacle convex, paleaceous. Paleae

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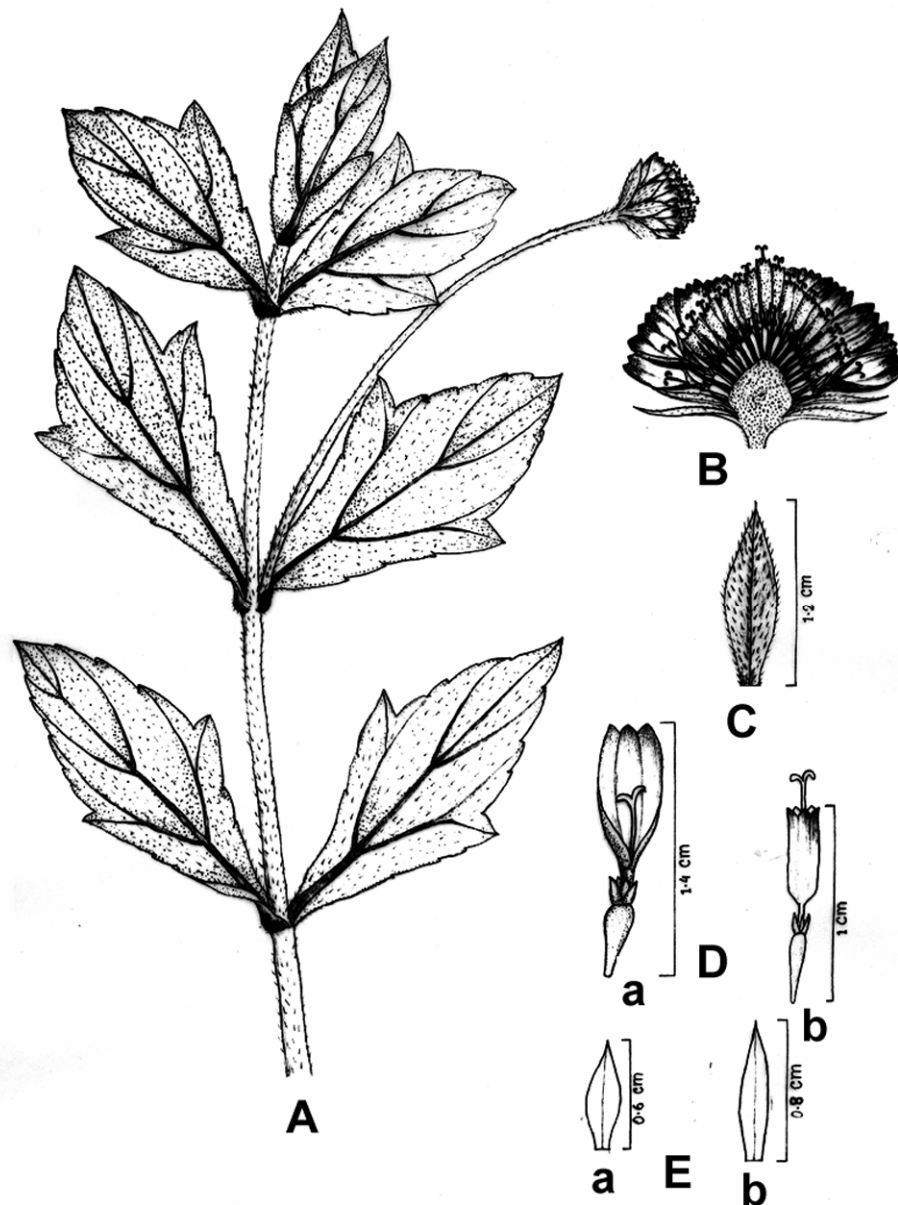


Fig. 1. *Wedelia trilobata* (L.) A.S. Hitchc. A. habit sketch (2/3 nat. size); B. L.S. of a capitulum; C. involucral bract; D. a. female floret, b. a hermaphrodite disc floret; E. a. outer palea, b. inner palea.

embracing the cypselas, concave. Ray florets 1-seriate, female, ligulate, 5-12 mm long; disc-florets many-seriate, tubular, bisexual. Corolla of the ray-florets golden yellow with 2-3-fid limb; that of disc-florets with 5-fid limb. Anthers appendaged, bases sagittate with minute auricles. Styler arms of outer florets elongated, tips acute, hairy; those of disc-

florets flattened, with acute appendages, hairy. Cypselas of outer florets 3-angled, those of disc-florets sub-terete or sub-truncate, tuberculate. Pappus a crown of short fimbriate scales. Fl. March-August.

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