**Sicyos angulatus** L. (Cucurbitaceae): a new adventive species for the flora of India

During the course of field work in 2013–2015, specimens of a cucurbit were collected from the forest area of Shimla (Himachal Pradesh). On the basis of study of these specimens and consultation of taxonomic literature \(^1\) and online herbaria, it was identified as *Sicyos angulatus*, a native of eastern North America. Literature survey \(^5\), searches in e-Flora of India (Botanical Survey of India, BSI) and Herbarium of BSI, Northern Regional Centre, Dehradun revealed that this species is new and adventive in India. A detailed description along with photographs is provided to facilitate its identification.


Common names: Bur-cucumber, one-seeded bur-cucumber, star-cucumber (English).

Annual vine, reaching 4–8 m in length (Figure 1a). Stem herbaceous, angular, pubescent. Leaves simple, alternate, shallowly 5-lobed, 5–15 × 7–15 cm, pubescent, palmately veined, lobes acute or acuminate with dentate margin (Figure 1b). Tendrils axillary, 3 or rarely 4 branched (Figure 1c). Flowers unisexual, borne on pubescent peduncles, both types occurring on the same plant (monoecious). Stamine flowers 10–12 mm in dia., in 3–10 flowered racemes, peduncles longer than the pedicels (Figure 1d). Pistillate flowers 3–5 mm across, smaller than stamine flowers, bell-shaped, 3–10 in compact globose cymes, peduncles and pedicels equal in length (Figure 1e). Calyx green, 5-toothed, pubescent. Corolla white with green striations, petals 5, connate at base, broadly campanulate. Stamens united to form a central column in stamine flowers (Figure 1d). Ovary in pistillate flower unilocular, style slender, stigmas 3 (Figure 1e). Fruits produced in star-shaped clusters, 1.5–3 cm in diameter, radiating from a central point (Figure 1g). Each fruit ovoid, 1-seeded berry, 10–15 mm, armed with slender spines, initially green, turning brown, indehiscent (Figure 1b). Seeds 8–10 × 6–8 mm, dark brown, flattened, tapered at one end, indehiscent (Figure 1f). Pollinated by wasps and bees (Figure 1f).

Flowering and Fruiting: September to November.

Distribution: India: Himachal Pradesh (Shimla), earlier reported from Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Herbarium specimen: Plant specimens (AT-1) were collected near Khalini, Shimla (31°5′18.58″N, 77°10′24.89″E, altitude 1998 m) Himachal Pradesh on 20 September 2015 and submitted in BSD (Acc. No. 116042).


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