

## HOMOEOPATHIC FLORA OF INDIA, 1 : VIOLACEAE

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### Introduction

For the proper study of the homoeopathic medicinal plants of the country, the need for a work containing the correct botanical name of the plant yielding the drug, detailed citations, vernacular names, descriptions, illustrations, key to the species for easy identification, part used and distribution has been felt. It is to fill this lacuna the present work has been undertaken and in this paper an account of the species of Violaceae used in homoeopathy is given

### Violaceae Batsch.

16 genera and about 900 species of tropical and temperate distribution. 3 genera and 40 species are reported from India, mostly in the Himalayas and mountains of Southern and Western India.

### Viola Linn.

Herbs, rarely shrubs. Leaves alternate, petioled, entire to pinnatisect. Stipules free or adnate to the petiole, persistent. Flowers 1-2 on long axillary bi-bracteolate peduncles, bisexual. Sepals 5, subequal, produced below their insertion at the base, persistent, entire to denticulate or fimbriate-dentate. Petals 5, erect or spreading, the lowest usually largest, saccate or spurred, the other 4 flat, subequal; the lateral pair smaller than the upper pair. Stamens 5, connivent around the gynoecium; anthers 2-celled, subsessile, each tipped with a small triangular appendage, the lower 2 with appendages projecting into the spur; style straight, curved or geniculate, filiform to clavate; stigma obtuse, lobed or triangular marginate, truncate, often beaked. Fruit 3-valved loculicidal capsule.

About 500 species distributed mainly in the temperate regions of the world. 35 species in India. 2 species, used in the homoeopathic system of medicine, are cultivated in the gardens in India as ornamental plants.

### Key to the Species

- Stipules pinnatifid to palmatifid.  
Lateral petals directed towards  
the top of the flower.  
Style globose at top ..... VIOLA TRICOLOR
- Stipules subulate — lanceolate.  
Lateral petals spreading horizontally.  
Style not globose at top. .... VIOLA ODORATA

### Viola Odorata

Linn. Sp. Pl. 934. 1753; Hook. f. & Thoms. in Hook. f. Pl. Brit. Ind. 1 : 184. 1872, *p.p.*; Blackwood, Mat. Med. Therap. Pharmac. 600. 1906; Allen, Encyclop. Mat. Med. 10 : 130. 1982 (Repr. ed.); Clarke, Dict. Pract. Mat. Med. 3 : 1547. 1982 (Repr. ed.); Anonymous, Homoeo. Pharm. Ind. 4 : 107. 1983; Boericke, Homoeo. Mat. Med. 674. 1984 (Repr. ed.). FIG. 1.

Bengali, Hindi : "*Banafshah*"; English : "*Sweet violet*"; Gujarati : "*Banaphsa*"; Marathi : "*Baga banosa*"; Kannada : "*Violethoo*"; Tamil : "*Vialettu*"; Telugu : "*Vayiletu*".

Perennial herbs about 15 cm high. Root-stock stout, articulated. Stems short. Leaf lamina up to 5.5 × 7.0 cm, broadly ovate-cordate; rounded to obtuse, crenate, glabrous to strigose; petiole up to 8 cm. Stipules up to 2.2 × 0.6 cm, free from the petiole, subulate-lanceolate, glandular fimbriate. Flowers up to 2.5 cm in diameter, violet or white, tinged with purple; peduncle up to 14 cm, bi-bracteolate at about the middle. Sepals up to 0.8 × 0.4 cm, obtuse. Petals up to 2.0 × 1.2 cm, obovate-orbicular, laterals bearded, spur ca. 5 mm, cylindrical-obtuse. Style ca. 2 mm, unciniate. Capsule ca. 5 mm in diameter, globose, pubescent.

*Flowers* : Almost throughout the year.

*Part used* : Whole plant in flower.

*Uses* : This drug is used in cancer, choroiditis, spasmodic cough, hoarseness, hysteria, neuralgia, otorrhoea, rheumatism in upper parts of the body when

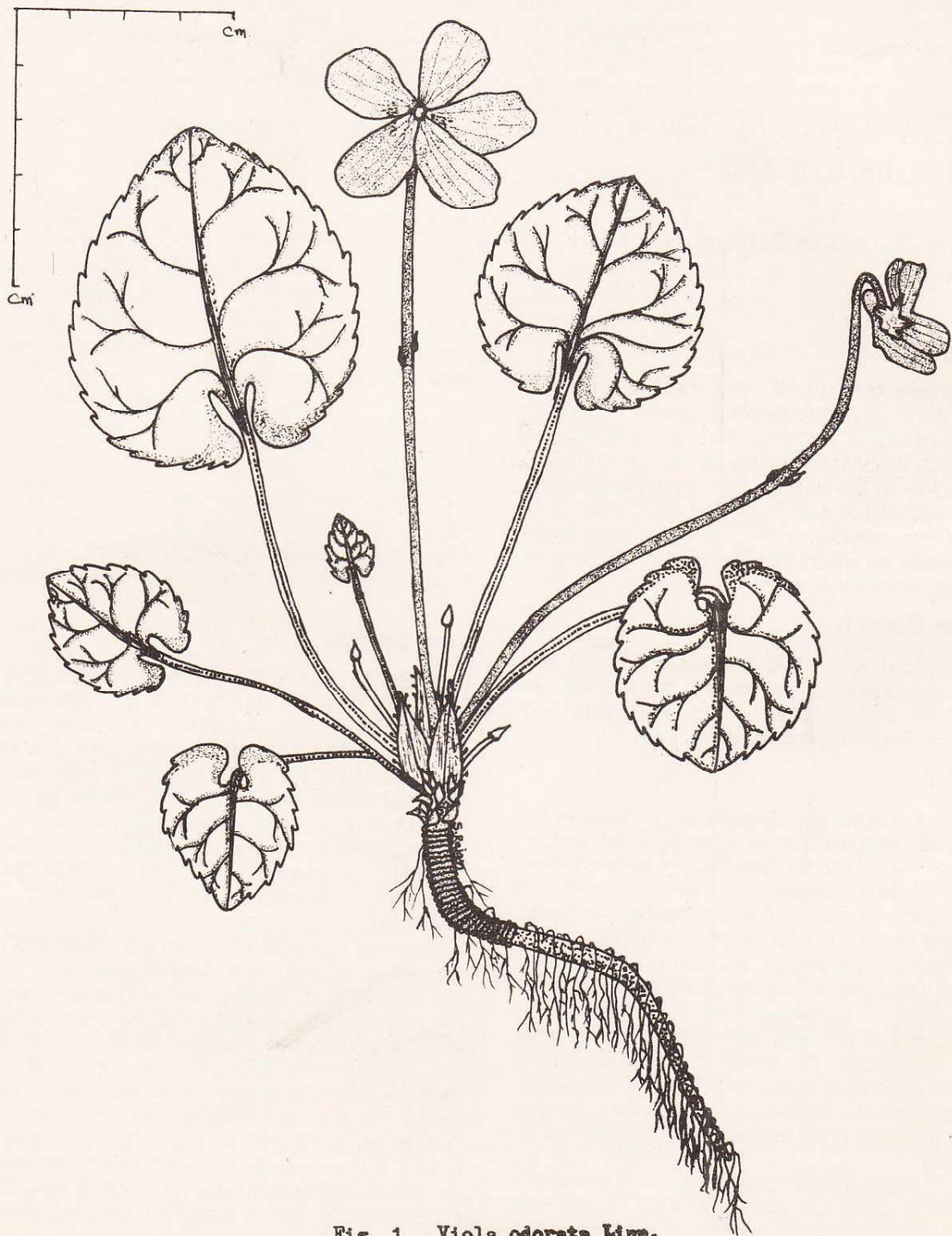


Fig. 1. Viola odorata Linn.



Fig. 2. Viola tricolor Linn.

on the right side, snake-bites, bee-stings, seminal emission, whooping cough and worm affection in children.

*Distribution:* INDIA: Jammu & Kashmir; often cultivated in hill stations elsewhere; EUROPE, N. AMERICA, N. & W. ASIA.

### Viola Tricolor

Linn. Sp. Pl. 935. 1753; Hook. f. & Thoms. in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. 1: 182. 1872 — in Obs.; Blackwood, Mat. Med. Therap. Pharmac. 600. 1906; Allen, Encyclop. Mat. Med. 10. 132. 1982 (Repr. ed.); Clarke, Dict. Pract. Mat. Med. 3: 1550. 1982 (Repr. ed.); Anonymous, Homoeo. Ind. 4: 108. 1983; Boericke, Homoeo. Mat. Med. 675. 1984 (Repr. ed.). FIG. 2.

English: "*Garden Pansy*", "*Heart's ease*".

Caulescent annual herbs. Root-stock absent. Stems up to 40 cm, ascending or erect, usually branched. Leaf lamina 1.5-7 × 0.5-2.2 cm, variable, basal leaves ovate, sub-cordate, those of the stem becoming ovate-lanceolate, obovate-oblong or lanceolate, cuneate, broadly crenate-dentate, obtuse; petiole up to 5 cm, often winged above. Stipules up to 4 cm, innatifid to palmatifid, terminal segment larger than others, entire or crenate. Flowers up to 5 cm in

diameter, irregular, violet or purplish, yellow or greenish-yellow, white or parti-coloured, very variable in colour and size. Peduncle up to 14 cm, exceeding leaves, bi-bracteolate above the middle. Sepals 0.7-1.5 × 0.2-0.6 cm, produced at base, linear-lanceolate, acute. Petals up to 2.5 × 3.2 cm, orbicular-obovate, laterals bearded at base and directed towards the top of the flower; spur ca. 5 mm. Style 2-2.5 mm, geniculate at base, globose at top; stigma hairy, laterally beaked. Capsule 8-14 mm, ovate-acute or ellipsoid, glabrous.

*Flowers:* Almost throughout the year.

*Part used:* Whole plant in flower.

*Uses:* The principal uses of this remedy are for eczema in childhood and nocturnal emission accompanied by very vivid dreams, for crusta lactea, ophthalmia, rheumatism, ringworm, syphilis, leucorrhoea, gout, gonorrhoea, etc.

*Distribution:* Cultivated in India, rarely found as an escape from cultivation; EUROPE, AMERICA.

### Acknowledgement

The authors are grateful to Dr. D.P. Rastogi, Director, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, New Delhi for the encouragement and facilities provided in carrying out the work and Shri B. V. Shetty, Deputy Director, Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore for going through the manuscript and making many useful suggestions.

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"Homoeopathy knows that a cure can take place by the reaction of vital force against the rightly chosen remedy that has been ingested, and that the cure will be certain and rapid in proportion to the strength with which the vital force still prevails in the patient."

"Organon", Preface to the 6th Edition

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