

Project Update: December 2018

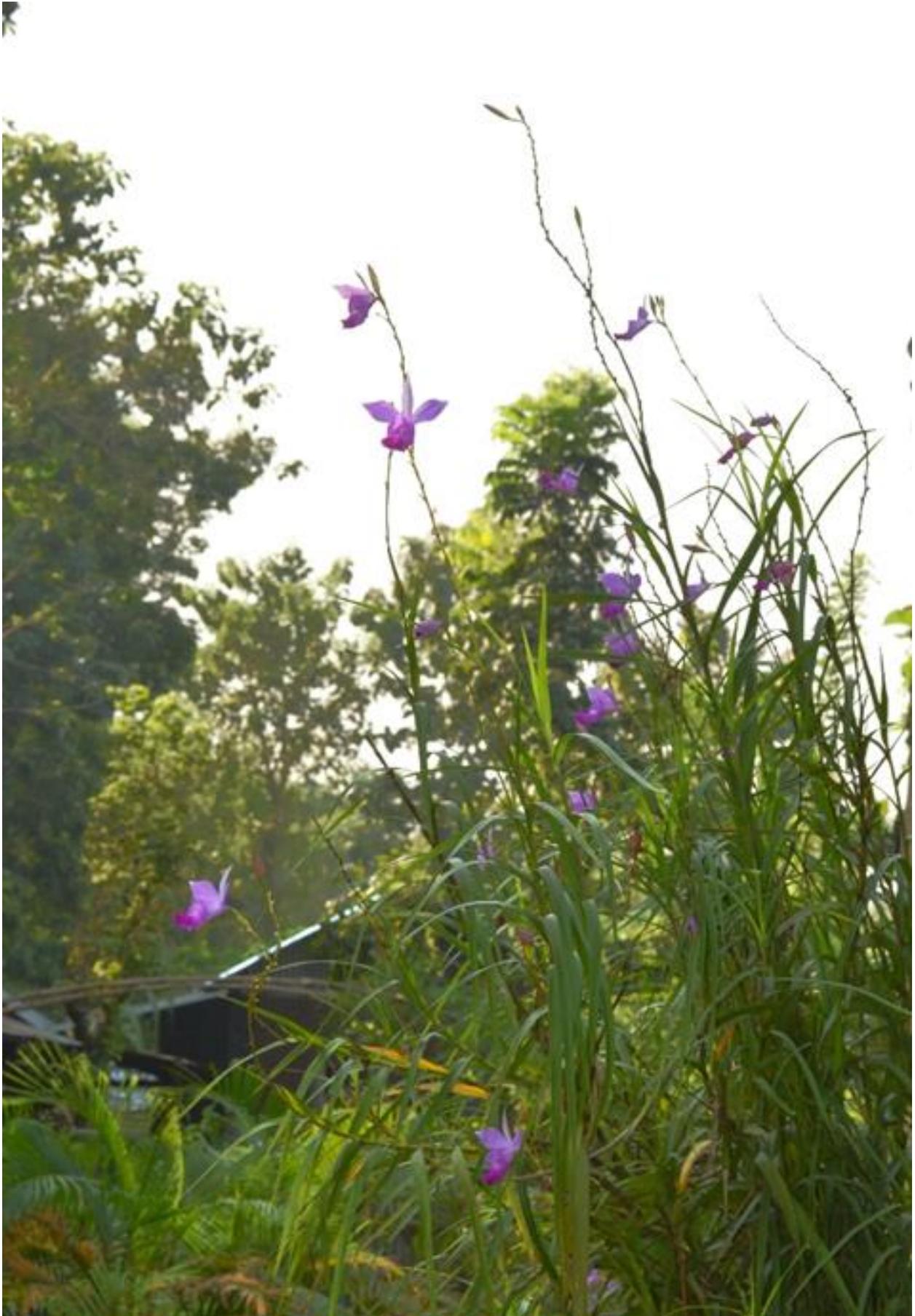
The field survey, along with data and sample collection for the second quarter, proceeded in the same manner as before. Multiple incidences of timber poaching were encountered during the survey in this quarter. The Forest Department was duly informed on every occasion. Departmental actions were taken and huge amounts of timber were recovered. Regular patrolling by the Forest Protection Unit at such sites has been undertaken since.

Six orchid species flowered during the period which includes two new records: *Arundina graminifolia*, the first terrestrial orchid of our survey was found in November 2011, and *Vanda coerulea*, a rare and endangered orchid, was found in the forest areas of Jampui Hills with an extremely small population size. This 'Blue Vanda' is on the IUCN Red List, Appendix II of CITES, Schedule VI of Wildlife Protection Act of India and in the Red Data Book on Indian Orchidaceae.

One research paper entitled "New Distributional Records to the Orchid Flora of Tripura" containing 10 new reports for the state was communicated in first week of October 2018. We also applied and got accepted for poster presentation in a National Conference on Orchids in February 2019 at Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. The poster includes a metadata analysis on specialised pollination mechanisms in the Orchidaceae family. This is a consequence of an extensive literature survey carried out by the team during the project. We plan on providing a copy of the poster after the conference.



Vanda coerulea during peak flowering in Jampui Hills



Synchronous flowering of *Arundina graminifolia*, a terrestrial orchid in Jampui Hills



Illegal felling of a *Shorea robusta* tree in Kumarghat Reserve Forest



Pinalia globulifera blooming in Jampui Hills