

# New species of orchid discovered in Wayanad

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A new species of plant that belongs to the Orchidaceae family, *Liparis sanamalabarica*, has been discovered from the Thollayiram on the Kattimattom hill ranges under the Meppadi forest range of the southern Western Ghats in Wayanad district.

The small herbaceous orchid has been collected by Pichan M. Salim, senior technical assistant, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) here under the supervision of V. Balakrishnan, Head, Community Agrobiodiversity Centre (CABC) of the MSSRF.

"*Liparis sanamalabarica* is currently known from two localities within the Thollayiram forests regions covering an area of 2 km," Mr. Salim said.

Forty mature individual plants are found in the area. Hubert Kurzweil, an expert in Orchidaceae family, of the



The newly discovered *Liparis sanamalabarica*.

Singapore Botanical Garden has confirmed the identity of the new species, Mr. Salim added.

The latest edition of the *Taiwania International Journal of Life Sciences* has published the discovery.

The epithet 'sanamalabarica' refers to the Malabar region ('sana' in Arabic means beautiful), where the specimen has been collected, Mr. Salim said.

The data gained from field studies were evaluated according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categorisation and at least 'vulnerable' status has been proposed for the species, Mr. Salim said.

He added that adequate measures should be adopted to ensure the protection of the species in its natural habitat.