

Two new species of parasitic plants discovered in Okinawa

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Accordingly, they in turn are named **Gastrodia nipponicoides** and **Gastrodia okinawensis**. This information has just been published in Phytotaxa Online Magazine on April 7, 2017.

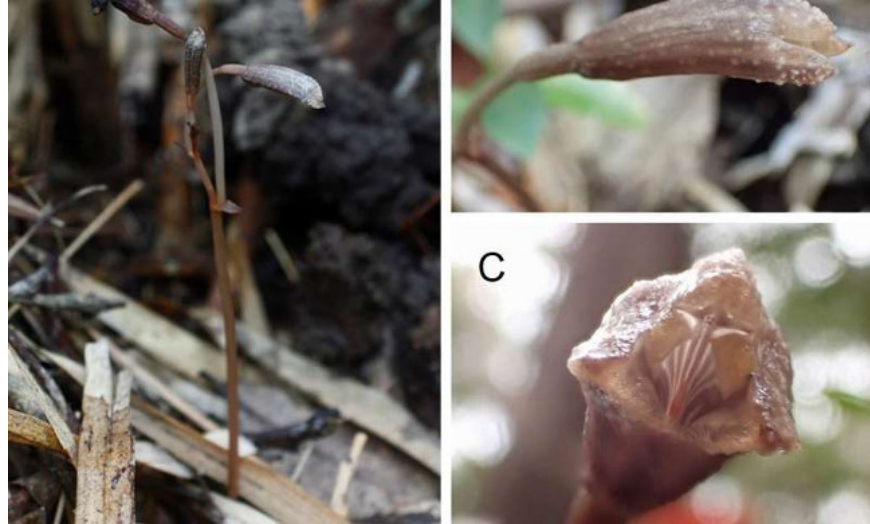
Previously, speaking of photosynthesis, it was one of the criteria for determining flora. However, in nature there are still some types based on the parasitic form to live in the form of mushrooms and absorb nutrients on the host plant. In addition to fungi, these types of vegetative vegetation are often called mycoheterotrophs.



Because it does not directly participate in photosynthesis, only parasites suck a bit of nutrients, so these two new parasitic plants only grow in a short period of time, can produce flowers or some fruit then disappear.

There are many types of parasitic plants of this type, very small and hard to find in nature, even forests in Japan or around the world. Professor Suetsugu said in a statement.

Professor Suetsugu discovered two parasitic plants *Gastrodia nipponicoides* and *Gastrodia okinawensis* on Okinawa tropical island in a natural field survey with independent biologists including Mr. Masakazu NAKAMA, Mrs. WATANABE Tazuko and WATANABE Mr. Hiromitsu. After the discovery, the group was supported by independent researchers, Mr. TOMA Tsugutaka, Mr. ABE Atsushi (researcher from the Okinawa Churashima Foundation), and Professor MORIGUCHI Mitsuru (Humanities Department of Okinawa University). as well as establishing new species.



The study showed that both of these new parasitic plants have many characteristics related to the strains of *Gastrodia nipponica*, belonging to Orchidaceae family. However, the biggest difference is the lip contour on the petals and the calyx, where the combination of stamens, petals, pistils, biological parts of flowers.

The measured dimensions show that *Gastrodia nipponicoides* is 3-6cm in size, with 1-4 black brown flowers, a 15mm long flower (Figure 1). In it, *G. okinawensis* plants are 10-17cm tall, with 1-4 light brown flowers, each about 20mm long (figure 2).

Previously, the team also found a new species called **Mycoheterotrophs** also parasites in the ecosystem of this forest. Contribute to creating a diverse and rich ecosystem that we have not yet discovered. And there may be a very small, very underground ecosystem that we can't discover or see with the naked eye.

In the year outside, Yanbaru forest was established as Yanbaru National Park with two more newly discovered species playing a very important role in this habitat.

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