

## *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Kōta, a New Variety from Hachijō Island, Tokyo, Japan

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**Abstract** *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Kōta is a new variety characterized by broader leaves than those of typical variety of *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino. This variety was discovered in Mt. Mihara-yama in Hachijō Island, Tokyo, Japan. Several specimens cited in this paper suggest that this variety is distributed in the Izu Islands as well as Honshu, mainland of Japan.

**Key words:** new variety of *Swertia japonica*, var. *latifolia*, Hachijō Island, broad leaf.

### Introduction

A floristic investigation of vascular plants of Suzaki, Shimoda City, in Izu Peninsula has been conducted since 2000 as a project study of the National Science Museum, Tokyo, under the title of the Study on Environmental Changes in Sagami Sea and Adjacent Coastal Areas by Continuous Comparison of Fauna and Flora. Suzaki is a small area located on the SE shore of the Izu Peninsula and a very interesting place from the viewpoint of floristic study. Plentiful taxa of vascular plants distributed in seashore areas within Japan are recognized in this area (Kōta *et al.*, 2005). Among these species, some are suspected to have close relationship to their counterparts in the Izu Islands where many endemic taxa are distributed (Ohba & Akiyama, 2002). I had a chance to botanize in Hachijō Island for the comparison of floras between the Izu Islands and the Suzaki. A new variety of *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Kōta, was found in Hachijō Island, the southernmost one in the Izu Islands.

### Description

***Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Kōta variety nov.**

Affinis *Swertiae japonicae* var. *japonicae*, sed lamina valde lata diversus.

**Habit.** Stems erect, simple or branched from the base, up to 22 cm in height; cauline leaves at lower stems narrowly elliptic acute at base, obtuse at apex, (1.5)2–3.5 cm long, 3–5 mm wide, those at higher stems narrowly elliptic with acute apex, with strong bitter taste; flowers in dense terminal panicles, 5-merous, calyx-segments linear to linear lanceolate, 9–12 mm long, corolla-lobes broadly lanceolate, 12–14 mm long, 4 mm wide, white with purple nerves (Figs. 1–3).

**Habitat.** On muddy soil of cutting slope, sunny place, by a forest road in mountain area of Mt. Mihara-yama, ca. 570 m above the sea level (holotype).

**Type.** Japan. Honshu. Tokyo: Nishi-hakuunzan in Mt. Mihara-yama, Hachijō Machi, Isl. Hachijō Island, *F.Kōta et al.*, 24080-a (Holotype; TNS, Fig. 1). *F.Kōta et al.*, 24080-b, 24080-c (Isotype; TNS); Tokyo: Miyake Island, *K.Hayashi*, 10, Nov. 1935; Chiba: Kazusa Taitomisaki, *S.Okuyama*, 12, Nov. 1933; Shizuoka: Mt. Ryusozan, Shizuoka City, *H.Takahashi*, 393;



Fig. 1. Holotype of *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Konta.

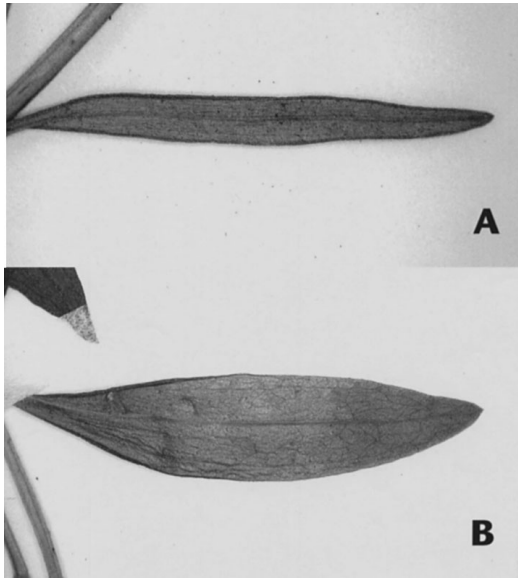


Fig. 2. Leaves of *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino. A. var. *japonica* with 1.5 mm wide, B. var. *latifolia* with 5 mm wide.

Kyoto: Ikagadani, Ohmiya Machi, Naka Gun, *N.Mariko*, 14, Nov., 1991. (Paratypes; TNS).

*Japanese name.* Hiroha-senburi.

*Notes.* *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Konta is similar in habit with the typical variety, but differs from the latter in wider leaves with 3 to 5 mm wide instead of needle ones of the latter. Specimens cited above show this new variety is not endemic in the Izu Islands.

### References

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- Ohba, H. & S. Akiyama, 2002. A synopsis of the endemic species and infraspecific taxa of vascular plants of the Izu Islands. *Mem. Natn. Sci. Mus., Tokyo*, (38): 119–160.



Fig. 3. Habit of *Swertia japonica* (Schult.) Makino var. *latifolia* Konta in Hachijo Island.