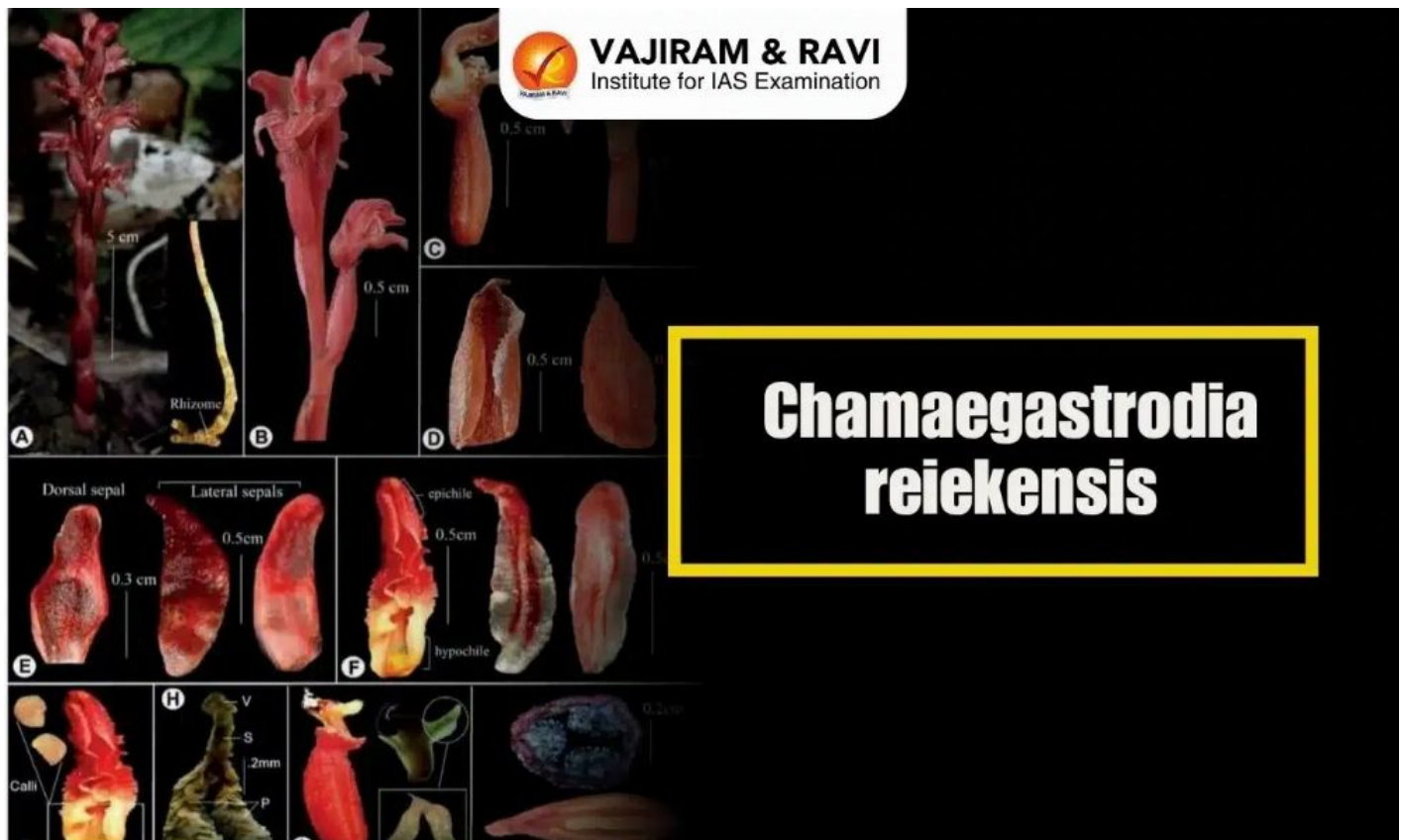


Chamaegastrodia reiekensis

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Chamaegastrodia reiekensis Latest News

Scientists from Mizoram University and Manipur University recently discovered a new and extremely rare orchid species — *Chamaegastrodia reiekensis* — in the forests of Northeast India.

About *Chamaegastrodia reiekensis*

- It is a new species of **orchid**.
- It is named after its type locality, **Reiek**, a scenic **mountain destination in Mizoram** known for its rich biodiversity.
- Belonging to the elusive genus *Chamaegastrodia*, this orchid is **holomycotrophic—entirely lacking chlorophyll and leaves—and derives its nutrients exclusively from underground fungi**.
- **Incapable of photosynthesis**, it relies wholly on **symbiotic fungal associations** for survival.
- With this addition, the global count of ***Chamaegastrodia* species** rises to eight.
- These mysterious orchids are sparsely **distributed across** parts of the **Eastern Himalayas, South-Central China, Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Nepal, and Thailand**.

- Notably, all **Indian representatives of this genus** have been recorded exclusively in **Northeast India**.
- *C. reiekensis* was found in moist, humus-rich soil near bamboo clumps at an elevation of 1,500 metres.
- Reiek forest — where the orchid was located — features a multi-layered canopy with tall emergent trees and dense understorey vegetation, offering niches for numerous unique plant species.
- With temperatures ranging between 20–28°C and annual rainfall between 200–250 cm, the forest supports tropical vegetation year-round.
- Flowering occurs from August to September, and fruiting from September to October.
- It has been **provisionally listed as Critically Endangered (CR) under IUCN criteria**.
- Its **small size and camouflaged coloration** make it extremely difficult to detect on the forest floor.
- The plant **emerges only briefly during its flowering and fruiting periods** — posing a major challenge for researchers.

Source: EM

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/chamaegastrodia-reiekensis/>

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