

Botanic name: *Ecbolium linneanum* Kurz.(syn. *E. viride* (Forsk.) Alston.

Common name: Blue Fox Tail, Neel Kantha in Bengali

Family: Acanthaceae

Habitat: Terrestrial

Distribution: Native to tropical Africa, distributed in Arabia, India, Malaya, SriLanka

Description: Low shrubby habit with woody root stock, bluish bifid flowers in dense spikes, large imbricate 4-ranked bracts oblong lanceolate lamina tapering at both ends and very short petioles; large oval glandular cells with dense contents, on leaf and stem periphery; leaves with caryophyllaceous stomata. The bacterial pathogens were strongly inhibited by leaf extracts but acetone extracts of stem have failed to inhibit the growth of *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* even at the highest concentration.

Phytochemicals: Biologically active glycoflavones, luteolin, orientin, vitexin and isoorientin (roots, flowers and leaves). A lignin named as ecbolin A (chloroform extract of roots).

Medicinal/Economic uses: Plant is used in gout and dysuria; decoction of leaves for stricture. Roots are given in jaundice, menorrhagia and rheumatism, leaves and stems have antioxidant & free-radical scavenging activity. Used in folk remedies and is reported to have a broad range of therapeutic effects.