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35. A REPORT ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *ANTIDESMA THWAITESIANUM* MUELL. - ARG. (EUPHORBIACEAE) FROM SOUTH ANDAMANS

INTRODUCTION

During botanical exploration of Mt. Harriet Hills (South Andamans) we came across some interesting specimens of *Antidesma* species. The specimens were critically studied at CAL and identified as *Antidesma thwaitesianum* Muell.-Arg. Airy Shaw (1972a, 1972b, 1981) reported the occurrence of this species from Andaman Islands on the basis of an old collection by Parkinson deposited at Kew (K.). This species has never been reported again from Andaman Island after Parkinson's collection (Parkinson, 575, without specific locality 15-5-1915). Chakrabarty & Balakrishnan (1992) in their revisionary work, reported that no specimen of this species from

Andaman Islands is traceable in Indian herbaria. The recent exploration of the slopes of Mt. Harriet ranges revealed small populations of this species growing at Wrightmyo and Kalatang forests of the Harriet ranges. Though *Antidesma thwaitesianum* Muell.-Arg. has a wide phytogeographical distribution from Sri Lanka to South-East Asia, in the Indian flora, it is confined to the Andaman Islands. Being a very rare and interesting species, an illustrated account is given below to facilitate its identification.

Antidesma thwaitesianum Muell.-Arg. in DC., Prodr. 15(2): 263. 1866; Airy Shaw in Kew Bull. 26: 360, 462. 1972 & in Kew Bull. Ad. ser. IV. 217. 1975 & in Kew Bull. 36: 364. 1981; Mandal & Penigr. in J. Eco. Tax. Bot. 4: 255. 1983; T. Shkrab.

& Balakr. in J. Econ. Tax. Bot. Ad. Ser. 9: 19. 1992.
A. bunius sensu Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 5: 358-9.
 1887 (Pro parte); Pax & Hoffm. in Engl., Pflanser.
 4, 147(15): 160 - 1. 1992. non (L.). Spreng. 1825.

Shrubs or small trees, c. 6 m tall, branchlets greyish, sparsely lenticellate. Leaves 8-19 x 3-8 cm, elliptic to elliptic oblong, or ovate-lanceolate, acuminate at apex, acute or rounded at base, coriaceous, glossy, lateral nerves c. 10 pairs, thin, flattened above, thinly raised beneath, midrib flattened above, raised, tapering beneath, venation finely reticulate, tessellated, petiole 1 cm long, pulvinate at apex, infructescence usually cauliflorous, very rarely axillary on old leaves, c. 7 cm long, fascicled. Fruits 7 x 5 mm, flattened, quadrate orbicular drupes with persistent stigma at apex, greenish turning reddish to finally blackish.

Fr.: April.

Ecology: Very rare in the inland evergreen forest at low altitude.

Distribution: Andamans (India); Sri Lanka, Indo-China, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Sumatra, Philippines and Borneo.

Specimen examined: Wrightmyo 16-4-1989, S.P. Mathew 20264 (CAL & PBL)

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36. A REPORT ON THE THREATENED ORCHIDS OF MANIPUR

As many as 34 species of orchids from North-East India are listed among the threatened plants of India, out of which only three species, namely *Dedrobium bensoniae* Reichb. f., *Renanthera imschootiana* Rolfe., and *Vanda coerulea* Griffith ex Lindl., are recorded from Manipur (Jain and Shastry 1983). However, I have observed three more species of threatened orchids growing in the hills and glades of Manipur.

Paphiopedilum spicerianum (Reichb. f.) Pfitz., an endemic and endangered plant recorded from Assam also grows in the Barak watershed of Manipur. This highly ornamental orchid is seen to grow in great abundance on the steep rocky cliffs of the Barak river in the Jiribam and Tamenglong Sub-divisions.

Pleione hookeriana (Lindl.) Williams, a rare orchid that is recorded to be endemic to Sikkim,

Arunachal Pradesh, Bhutan and Nepal also grows in Manipur at elevations 2700-3000 m above MSL.

Galeola falconeri Hook. f., an endemic and rare orchid of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh is also found in the parallel folds of the Shiroy-Kasom hill ranges of Manipur.

It is next to impossible to collect and grow *Galeola falconeri* - a saprophyte, in orchid gardens. However, the *Paphiopedilum spicerianum* and *Pleione hookeriana* are successfully grown in the state owned orchid gardens of Manipur, as a part of ex-situ conservation of the threatened orchids of the State.

A new genus of orchid "*Kalimpongia*" was discovered in Manipur at the elevation 1700-2000 m (Pradhan 1977) and three different species of orchids, namely *Kalimpongia narajitii*, *Scheonorchis manipurensis* and *Ascocentrum ampullaceum* var.



Mathew, Sam P and Abraham, Susan. 1995. "A report on the occurrence of *Antidesma thwaitesianum* Muell.: Arg. (Euphorbiaceae) from south Andamans." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 92, 143–144.

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