

Occurrence of an endemic species *Alysicarpus naikianus* Pokle in the Eastern Ghats, India.

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According to Ohashi et al. (1981), the genus *Alysicarpus* Necker ex Desv., belongs to the family Fabaceae, is represented by 25-30 species distributed in the tropical and sub-tropical parts of the Old and New World. Pokle (1999) reported that the *Alysicarpus* abundantly occurs in the dry zones of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka states of India with 15 species and seven varieties.

In India, *Alysicarpus beddomei* Schindl., *A. racemosus* Benth. and *A. pubescens* Laws. var. *vasavadae* (Hemadri) Sanjappa have already been reported as endemic species by Ahmedullah and Nayar (1987) and the fourth one, *A. naikianus* Pokle is an endemic known from Maharashtra. Recently, Chavan and Sardesai (2012) who reported that a number of additional populations were found in Western India in addition to the type localities. Until now it is known to be chiefly distributed along the eastern escarpments of the Western Ghats and the coastal plains of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat in Western India.

During floristic explorations in various hilly areas of the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu, a few specimens belonging to the genus *Alysicarpus* were collected from the Yercaud hills. Based on critical study on specimens as well as literature (Chavan and Sardesai.2012), the species were identified as *Alysicarpus naikianus* Pokle. A thorough scrutiny of literature (Gamble,1915-1935; Nair and Henry, 1983; Matthew, 1991) revealed that this species was hitherto unrecorded from the entire region of the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh as well. It was considered to be rare and endemic to the Western India. However, intensive collections in Yercaud hills clearly indicate that this species also occur in the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu.

Alysicarpus naikianus Pokle, in Reinwardtia 11(4): 285-294.1999. A. gamblei non Schindl. 1925: Sensus Yadav & Sardesai, Fl. Kolhapur District. 135. 2002; Chavan and Sardesai in J. Threat. Taxa 4(5): 2590-2592. 2012.

Erect, much branched, annual herbs 10-20 cm tall. Stem brown, substriated, sparsely pubescent; branches slender; leaves unifoliate, glabrous above; sparsely pubescent beneath; stipule broadly triangular acute, 4.5-5.5 x 2.5-3 mm, glabrescent; stipels absent; lamina variable in shape, usually ovate to obovate, oblong, 6-7 x 5-8 mm, subcordate at base, obtuse. The leaves subtending the inflorescence linear oblong, 8-12 x 3-7 mm. Raceme axillary and terminal, dense 6-10 flowered, peduncle distinct, 1.5-2 cm long, much elongating (2.5-6.5 cm) in fruits. Bracts caduceous broadly ovate, 3.4-4 x 3-3.5 mm, shortly acuminate, glabrous; bracteoles subulate, ca- 2.5-1 mm, obtuse. Calyx glumaceous,

forming distinct basal 1-1.5 mm long tube; lobes sub equal lanceolate acute, 3-3.5 mm long, the dorsal two united with a distinct notch at apex, sparsely ciliated. Corolla uniformly pink purple; standard petals broadly ovate, ca- 4 x 3.75 mm, distinctly stalked; wings and the keel petals slightly shorter. Pods articulated, 4-6 jointed with 5-7 articles; article subterete, ca- 1.5 mm long, faintly reticulated, deep brown at maturity. Seeds subglobose, ca- 1 mm in diameter shining brown (Fig. 1, 2 & 3).

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Fig 1. Illustration of *Alysicarpus naikianus* Pokle (Fabaceae)



Keleur falls



Yercaud Hills of Eastern Ghats

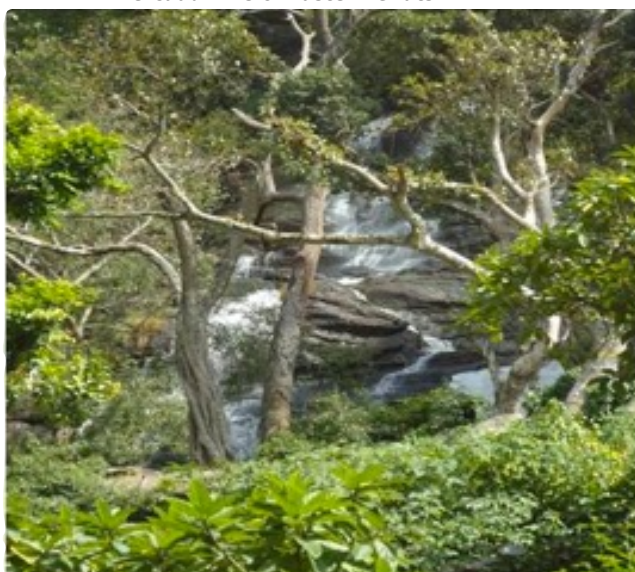


Fig 2. New distribution map and habitats

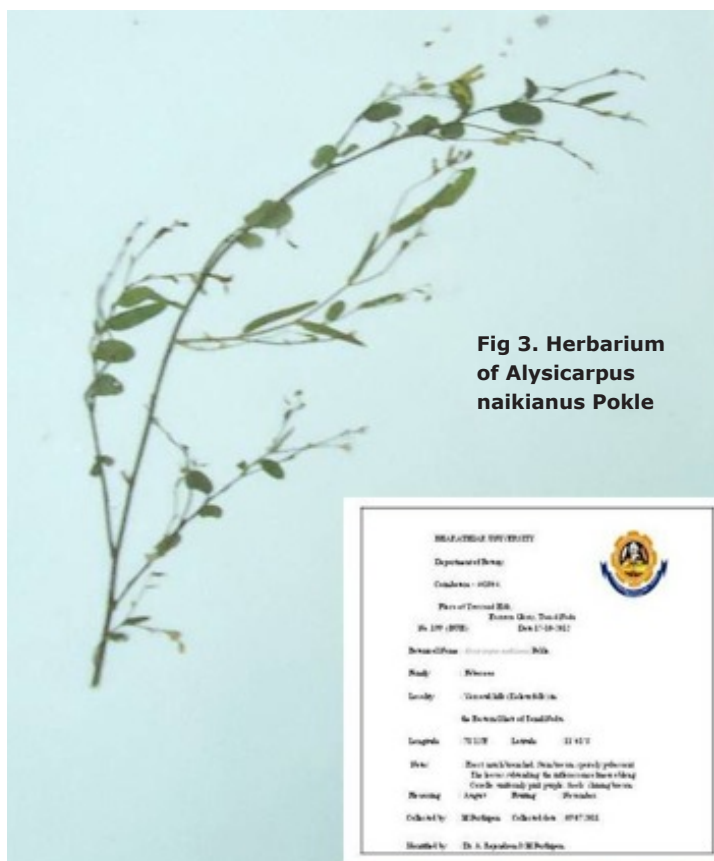


Fig 3. Herbarium of Alysicarpus naikianus Pokle

Flowering and Fruiting: August–November.

Distribution: Endemic to Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra and now in Tamil Nadu. In Kerala neither it is reported nor included the flowering plants of Kerala by Sasidharan (2004).

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