

NOTES ON *MARSDENIA RAZIANA* YOGAN. & SUBRAM., A KARNATAKA AND KERALA WESTERN GHATS ENDEMIC

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Abstract

Marsdenia raziana Yogan. & Subram. (Asclepiadaceae), is endemic to the Western Ghats of Karnataka and Kerala. It was first collected in 1970 from Yelnir Forests of Western Ghats, Samse Range, Chikmagalur District and described during 1976. Present collections from Agumbe and Kannur (Cannanore) form the first report for Shimoga District and extended distribution from southern region of Kerala State respectively.

Key words

First record, *Marsdenia raziana*, Shimoga District, Kerala, range extension

Introduction

During intensive botanical studies conducted in Agumbe MPCA (Medicinal Plants Conservation Area) an interesting species of *Marsdenia* was collected. Critical studies have confirmed it as *Marsdenia raziana*. The specimens have also been compared with the type specimens housed at Regional Research Centre, Ay. (RRC) Bangalore. This species was so far known only from the type locality, Yelnir in the Western Ghats near Samse in Chikmagalur District, Karnataka State. The report of this species from Shenduruni Wildlife Sanctuary of Kollam (Quilon) District by Sasidharan and Anto (1997) formed new report for Kerala State. Raghavan and Sharma (1988) considered it to be rare. A brief description with ecological notes is provided for better understanding of this endemic and little-known taxon.

Materials examined

19.xi.1997, near Honake Abbe Waterfalls, Agumbe MPCA, Shimoga District, Karnataka, 550m, coll. K. Ravikumar and P.S. Udayan, 13483; 3.iii.1995, near Chanthanathode, border between Cannanore and Wyanad District, Kerala, 800m, coll. Biju and Joy, 10188.

Distribution

Endemic to Western Ghats of Karnataka and Kerala.

Flowering

November-December

Biotic association

This endemic climber is rare and found to grow near moist and shady localities near waterfalls of evergreen forests. It is seen growing with herbs like *Cyathula prostrata*, *Oplismenus compositus* and *Pellionia* sp.; climbers such as *Cyclea peltata*, *Miquelia dendata* and *Piper mullesua*; shrubs like *Dechapetalum gelonioides*, *Leea indica* and *Nothopegia beddomei*; and trees such as *Arenga wightii*, *Litsea deccanensis*, *Poeciloneuron indicum* and *Mallotus tetracoccus*.

Description

Marsdenia raziana Yogan. & Subr., in Proc. Indian Acad. Sci. 83B: 147-149: 1976; Yoganarasimhan *et al.*, Fl. Chikmagalur Dist. 214. 1981.

Twining glabrous shrubs. Latex watery. Stems glabrous, purplish-green; internodes 8-20cm long. Leaves opposite, elliptic-oblong, 13-16 by 6-9cm, base obtuse or rarely slightly subcordate to oblique, apex acuminate, margin entire, chartaceous, glabrous; upper surface of the leaf base with 3 + 3 brown glandular scales on either side of main nerve; acumen 1-1.5cm long, straight and rarely twisted; petioles 2-3cm long, glabrous, twisted, canaliculate, slightly swollen below; cross-nerve 6-10 pairs, with one pair of indistinct basal nerve just above the lamina; each pair 1.9-2.5cm apart, prominently looping and joining at 4-8mm distance below the leaf margin. Inflorescence a condensed corymb, inter-petiole, ca. 3cm long; corymbs 4-6 in an inflorescence, each corymb 3-5-flowered; peduncles ca. 1.5cm long, bent, stout, green, glabrous; pedicels 3-5mm long, purplish-pink, glabrous, subsucculent. Bracts 2, triangular, ca. 0.5mm, purplish, glabrous. Calyx 5-lobed, free almost to base, puberulous without, glabrous within; lobes ca. 6 x 3mm, ovate-acute, fleshy, margins ciliolate, purplish, glabrous, shiny. Corolla

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urceolate or subcampanulate, 5-lobed, puberulous without; lobes *ca.* 5 x 4mm, ovate-acute, fleshy, free above, reflexed when open, contorted. Staminal corona of five erect fleshy lobes adnate to staminal column, free at apex, base with 2 short flaps. Gynostegium *ca.* 5mm long, arising from the base of corolla. Anthers erect, with a hyaline membranous appendage. Pollinia erect, 1 in each anther. Ovary *ca.* 4mm long, 2-celled, free; ovules many; style short; stigma *ca.* 4mm long, shortly 2-lobed, thimble-shaped. Fruits not seen.

Remarks

The collection from Kannur, Kerala was kept unidentified for nearly seven years in the Wyanad Social Service Society (WSSS) Medicinal Plants Conservation Park (MPCP). A critical study by us had confirmed its identity. Therefore the collection from Kannur District extends its distribution from southern to northern parts of Kerala. The voucher specimens (3 numbers) of this species are deposited in the herbarium of FRLHT, Bangalore and one in the herbarium at WSSS, Wyanad, Kerala.

In the original description the fruits have not been described so far. Attempts made to collect the fruits went futile. Nevertheless, the species is located and is protected in the Someshwara Wildlife Sanctuary and a part of it is an MPCA, the reproductive biology

has to be studied so as to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic factors acting upon the species reproduction.

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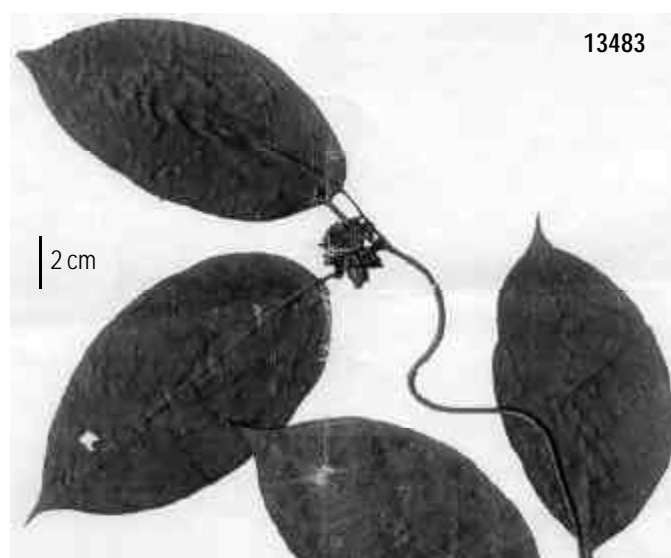


Figure 1. *Marsdenia raziana*, Yogan. & Subr.