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SPIGELIA ANTHELMIA L. A NEW RECORD FROM MAHARASHTRA

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While working on project, "Electronic herbarium" and digital database of plants of Mumbai, the authors came across a plant, which could not be identified based on Flora of British India (J. D. Hooker, 1885); Flora of Presidency of Bombay (T. Cooke, 1904), Flora of Maharashtra State (N.P. Singh *& al.*, 2000) Flora of Maharashtra (M. R. Almeida, 2002). After consulting experts and extensive survey of literature, the plant was identified as *Spigelia anthelmia* L. that was found to be a new record to the flora of Maharashtra. The present paper deals with the salient features of the species and its systematic position.

Spigelia anthelmia L. Sp. Pl. 149. 1753; Leenhouts in Steenis, Fl. Males. 1, 6 : 376. 1962; Hutchison in the families of flowering plants : vol.1 1973, Oommachan & Srivastava in J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc. 84 : 730. 1987; H. Naithani, Fl. Pl. India, Nepal, Bhutan : 290. 1990; Watson and Dallwitz in the families of flowering plants : 1992; Umamaheshwari, Muthukumar and Daniel in Bull. Bot. Surv. India : 37 (1-4) : 133-137. 1995. **(Fig.1)**

Annual herb, 12-50 cm high, branches 2-6 at node, internodes 4-24 cm; stipules interpetiolar at the basal pairs of leaves; leaves sessile, 2-4 clustered at the apex (the internode is much reduced between the uppermost pair of leaves), ovate-lanceolate, apex acuminate, base rounded, 2-9.5 cm long × 0.6-3 cm broad; inflorescence terminal, 2-4 trichotomous, monochasial scorpioid cyme, up to 10 cm long; flowers 0.6-0.9 cm long × 0.3 cm across; (opening between 12:00 noon 2:00 pm for a short while), bracteate; calyx campanulate, divided nearly to the base, lobes 5, linear-lanceolate, persistent; corolla tubular, tube plicate, off white with pink longitudinal bands in the folds, lobes triangular; stamens 5, epipetalous, inserted below the middle of the tube; ovary sessile, fruit dehiscent, didymous loculicidal capsule, with persistent style base, glochidiate, seated on boat-shaped, white receptacle, seeds 6-8 in each locule.

Fl. & Fr.: May Dec.

Distrib.: Native of South America, naturalised in Tropical West Africa, Malayasia. Runs wild in certain parts of Deccan Peninsula.



Fig. 1 : Spigelia anthelmia L. :
1. Habit; 2. Leaves and Inflorescence; 3. Inflorescence; 4. Flower and Bud; & 5. Capsule and Receptacle.

Habitat : In open sunny places.

Note : *Spigelia anthelmia* L. was collected first time in open sunny sites growing around railway tracks (between wooden sleepers) at Dadar Parel in Mumbai on 06.05.2003 and subsequent year at same place and further at Matunga. A population of about 2000 individuals were observed.

Linnaeus (1753) treated *S. anthelmia* L. in Loganiaceae. Bentham and Hooker (1862-1883) divided this family into seven tribes (Antonieae, Buddlejeae, Desfontainieae, Euloganieae, Gelsemieae, Potalieae, and Spigelieae) and placed this species in the tribe Spigelieae of family Loganiaceae. Hutchison (1973) divided the Loganiaceae *sensu* Bentham and Hooker into 7 distinct families (elevated the tribes to families) and established new order Loganiales for these families together with the family Oleaceae. Leeuwenberg and Leenhouts (1980) divided Loganiaceae into 10 different tribes, some of which consists of one or only a few species. Oommchan and Srivastava (1987) recorded *S. anthelmia* L. for India from Jabalpur environs (Madhya Pradesh) and placed this genus in Spigeliaceae. Watson and Dallwitz (1992) also kept this genus in monogeneric family Spigeliaceae Mart. with 50 species. Umamaheshwari *& al.*

(1995) reported it from Tuticorin harbour (Tamil Nadu) and treated in the family Spigeliaceae. Takhtajan (1997) split Loganiaceae into 12 separate families and kept this genus in Spigeliaceae in his recent classification. Recently Backlund & *al.* (2000) based on combined sequence data from the plastid genes rbcL and ndhF resolved the systematic position of genus *Spigelia* along with 12 other genera (*Antonia, Bonyunia, Gardneria, Geniostoma, Labordia, Logania, Mitrasacme, Mitreola, Neubergia, Norrisia, Stryhnos* and *Usteria*) and placed under Loganiaceae. We follow this view in placing this species in Loganiaceae.

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