DIOSCOREA KAMOONENSIS KUNTH (DIOSCOREACEAE) — A NEW REPORT FOR ARUNACHAL PRADESH

M. BHAUMIK AND M.K. PATHAK

Botanical Survey of India, Howrah - 711 103

In course of our plant exploration in Dihang Dibang Biosphere Reserve during November 1999, we collected a species of *Dioscorea*, on the way to Brunii from Anini at an elevation of c. 1640 m. It was found to be *Dioscorea kamoonensis* Kunth, hitherto not reported from Arunachal Pradesh.

A brief description of the specimen collected along with other relevant data is given here as follows :

Dioscorea kamoonensis Kunth, Enum. Plant. 5 : 395. 1850; Prain & Burkill in J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal n.s. 10(1): 21. 1914; Hara & al., Enum. Fl. Pl. Nepal 1: 68. 1978.

Tubers cylindrical, c. 9 × 3 cm, bulbils globose, wrinkled, black. Stem hairy, left twining. Leaves alternate, petiolate, membranaceous, 3 5 foliolate, glabrous or sparsely hairy beneath, acuminate; middle leaflets c. 6 × 2 cm, ovate - elliptic; lateral leaflets oblique. Male spikes 3 7 cm long, 3 5 flowered; flowers c. 1.5 mm across, globose, bracteate, subsessile; bracts with creamy hairs; tepals 6, c. 1 × 0.75 mm, ovate, sparsely hairy; stamens 3; staminodes 3. Female spikes axillary, 8 16 cm long, in pairs, hairy, 8 22 flowered; flowers sessile, bracteate at young stage; tepals 6, c. 1.5 × 0.5 mm, in two whorls, densely golden hairy, ovate to lanceolate, acuminate; style short; stigma triforked, curved. Capsules c. 1.8 × 1.2 cm; seeds elongate-oblong, with wing on one side.

Fl. & Fr.: July-October.

Specimens examined : INDIA : Arunachal Pradesh, Dibang Valley, July, 1999, *M. Bhaumik & M.K. Pathak* 2665 (CAL); Meghalaya, Khasia hills, Aug. 1885, *G. Mann s.n.* acc. no. 474306 (CAL); Shillong, 9th August, 1885, *C.B. Clarke* 38715A (CAL); Sikkim, Lachung valley, 16th September, 1892, Gammie 1238 (CAL). NEPAL: Baricot, 17th August, 1952, *O. Polunin* & al., 472(CAL).

The plants were found to grow in few patches in shady and moist areas of the hill slopes away from human interference. The soil was noted to be sandy, mixed with gravel. The associated species were *Alnus nepalensis* D. Don, *Dioscorea belophylla* (Prain) Haines, *Ophiopogon* sp., *Pinus wallichiana* A.B. Jackson and *Spiraea callosa* Thunb.

Distribution : INDIA : Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim,

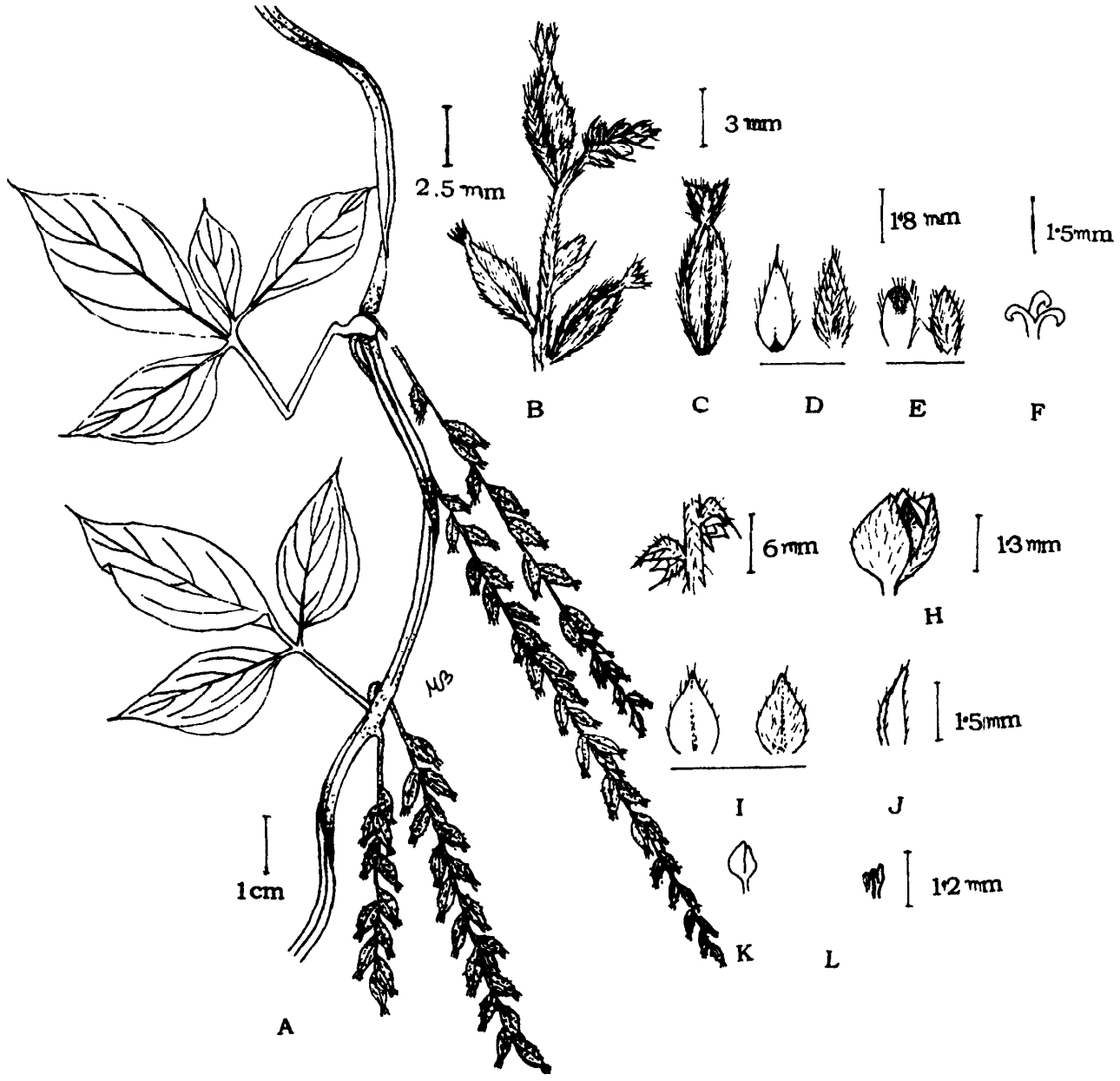


Fig. 1 : *Dioscorea kamoonensis* Kunth – A. part of a female plant; B. part of a female inflorescence; C. female flower; D. outer perianth; E. inner perianth; F. stigma; G. part of a male inflorescence; H. male flower; I. outer perianth; J. inner perianth; K. stamen; L. staminode.

Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh; Nepal, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Thailand.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Dr. M. Sanjappa, Director, Botanical Survey of India and Dr. S.K. Verma, ex Prof. and Head, P.G. Department of Botany, T.M. Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur for their help and encouragement.