REIDIA SINGAMPATTIANA SEBASTINE ET HENRY (EUPHORBIACEAE) — A RARE AND LITTLE KNOWN TAXON FROM WESTERN GHATS

This communication reports on the rediscovery of the rare, endemic taxon *Reidia singampattiana* Sebastine et Henry, about three decades after its type collection. In one of our frequent visits to Kalakad Reserve Forest, Western Ghats, we encountered the occurrence of this taxon. This species was described by Sebastine and Henry (1960) from Kakkachi area, located in the Kalakad sanctuary.

The striking features are its peculiar habit and habitat. The plant grows along the banks of rivers in dense, humid evergreen forest at an altitude of 1,310 m. It exhibits a wide variation in habit from an undershrub to a small tree up to 4 m high. Bark is greyish, twigs are quadrangular and woody. Leaves are small, entire, elliptic, equilateral (but oblique in flowering twigs), aromatic, pellucid punctate and shortly petioled. The tree displays a distinct top canopy of pale green leaves and a lower canopy of deep green, coriaceous leaves. Flower buds are small and pale green.

Only a few plants were located in Kalakad Reserve Forest, on the banks of the river Pachayar, way to Naterikal, 1,310 m. The associated plants in the habitat include *Lycianthes laevis* (Dunal) Bitter, *Memecylon subcordatum* Congn., *Polyscias acuminata* Seem and *Symplocos monantha* Wt.

Needless to say, the endemic taxon *Reidia singampattiana* deserves conservation. The floristic richness and endemism in this forest have been emphasized (Parthasarathy and Mahadevan, 1985).

Specimens examined : Type collection-isotype in BSI (MH) from Kakkachi, Tirunelveli District, Sebastine et Henry, 15-10-1957 ; Parthasarathy; 906, Kalakad R.F.—way to Naterikal 1,310 m, 22-8-84.

Distribution : Endemic to hills of Tirunelveli, Western Ghats, Tamil Nadu.

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A NOTE ON THE GENUS *OSTODES* (EUPHORBIACEAE)

The genus *Ostodes* was established by Blume in 1825 on the basis of a single species, *O. paniculata*, based on the type from Java. Since then, no less than 20 additional species have been attributed to the genus from time to time by different authors. To accommodate these varied assortment of species referred to the genus, Mueller (1866) even established two sections, viz. sect. *Euostodes* and sect. *Geloniastrum*. Thus the genus was considered to represent a polymorphic complex. Already in 1887, J. D. Hooker referred *Ostodes* as 'a heterogenous assemblage of trees and shrubs.' It