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FIRST REPORT OF *ALECTRA PARASITICA* A. RICH. (SCROPHULARIACEAE) FROM INDIA

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During plant exploration work in Akola district, Maharashtra State in 1977 and 1978 the authors collected two interesting species of *Alectra* Thunb. (Scrophulariaceae) *viz.* *A. thompsoni* Hook. f. (*S. Y Kamble* 150497) and *A. parasitica* A. Rich. (*S. Y. Kamble* 150188). The identification of the former has been confirmed at Central National Herbarium, Howrah. In connection with the identification of the latter, the protologue and few authentic specimens of *A. parasitica* A. Rich. (*Radcliffe Smith* and *S. J. Henchie*, 4944, *N. Yemen* and *William Burges*, 2117, Ethiopia) received from Kew Herbarium have been consulted. Critical study of *A. parasitica* and its var. *chitrakutensis* M. A. Rau (1961) (Holotype, DD) led to the confirmation of the specimen (*S. Y. Kamble* 150188) as *A. parasitica* A. Rich. which has not been so far reported from India though Hooker f. (1884) and Gamble (1957 Repr. ed.) reported two species *viz.* *A. thomsoni* Hook. f. and *A. sessiliflora* (Vahl) Kuntz. var. *monticola* (Engl.) Melch. (=*A. indica* Benth.) in their respective floras.

Hence a detailed description with analytical sketches of *A. parasitica* A. Rich. and *A. thompsoni* Hook. f. are given as they are new records to India and Maharashtra respectively.

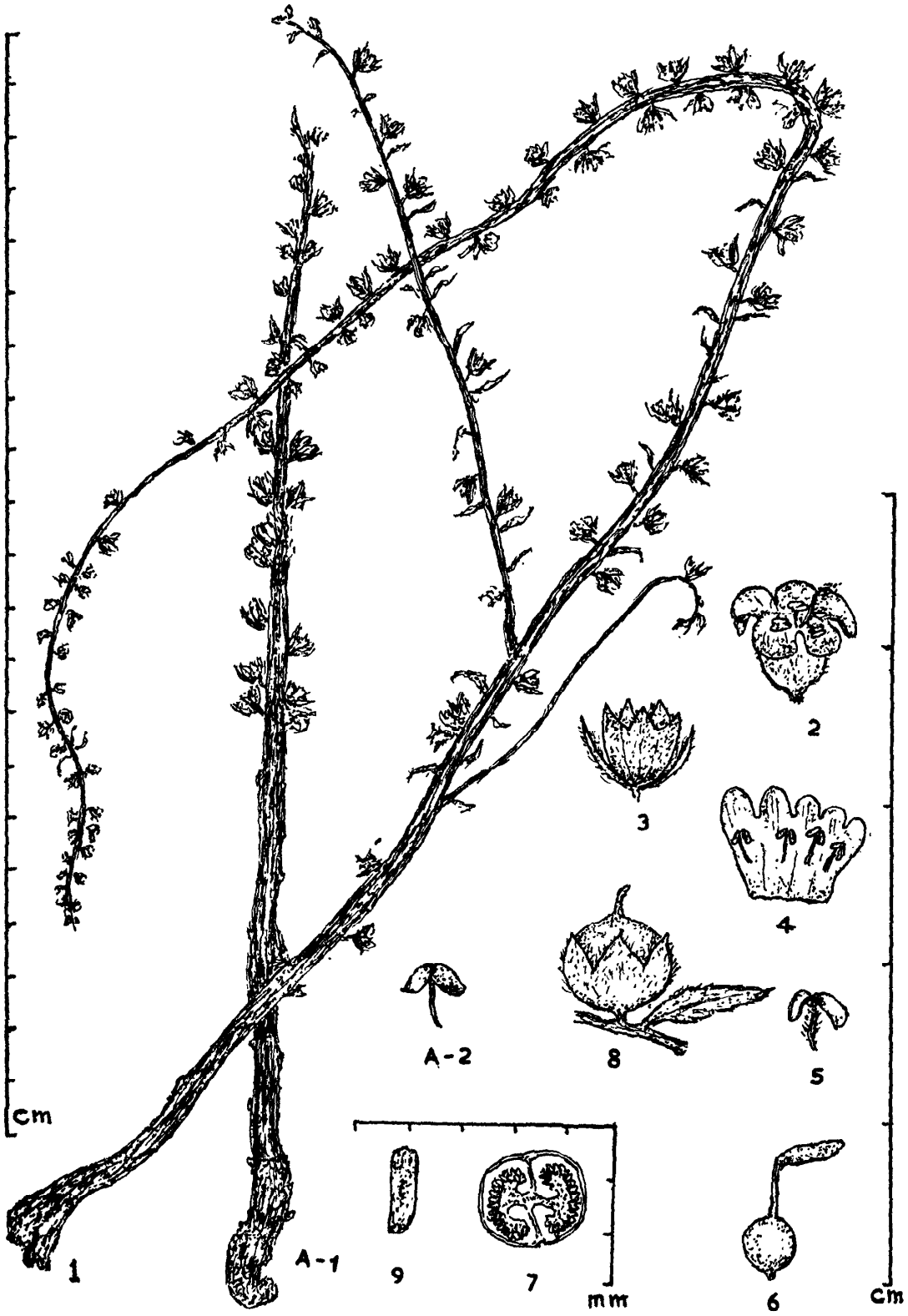
Alectra parasitica A. Rich. *Tent. Fl. Abyss.* ii : 117. 1851.

An erect herb up to 25 cm in height (incl. erect rhizome which is 3.0-4.0 cm), under the shade of *Vitex negundo* Linn. and *Barleria* sp. (apparently root parasite of the above spp.). Stem 0.1-0.4 cm thick, dark purple, angular, hispidulous, turning black on drying. Rhizome 0.3-0.7 cm thick, without scales, orange red. Flowers in terminal spikes or racemes, with a very short pedicels up to 0.1 cm. Floral leaves or bracts 0.6-0.8 cm long, scale-like, sub-opposite, elliptic-ovate with acute tip, sparsely serrate, hispidulous. Bracteoles two, 0.4-0.5 cm long, linear, hispidulous. Corolla about 1.0 cm long, yellow with red to brown streaks, lobes usually five, sometimes six (two long and three short) glabrous. Calyx campanulate, persistant, with five unequal triangular lobes. Stamens four to six, filaments glabrous, anther lobes slightly unequal. Style simple ; stigma elongate, inflexed, tongue shaped, hairy. Ovary glabrous, 0.3 cm across with two locules and axile placentation ; ovules numerous. Capsule 0.5 cm across, subglobose, pedicelled, loculicidal, four valved, a little broader than long with persistant calyx. Seeds numerous, cuneiform ; testa lax, reticulate (Figs. A1 & A2).

This taxa can be distinguished from *A. thompsoni* Hook. f. by its glabrous filaments and from *A. parasitica* A. Rich. var. *chitrakutensis* M. A. Rau by the absence of strongly rhizomatous development of the underground parts of the stem with scales.

Fls. & Frts. August-November.

Date of receipt : 23.10.80. Date of acceptance : 19.8.82



Alectra thompsoni Hook. f.

Figs. 1-9 : 1. Whole plant. 2. Flower. 3. Calyx with two bracteoles. 4. Corolla (spread open). 5. Stamen with ciliate filament. 6. Ovary with inflexed style. 7. T. S. Ovary. 8. Fruit with persistant calyx and bract. 9. Seed.

Alectra parasitica A. Rich.

Figs. A1 & A2 : A1. Whole plant. A2. Stamen with glabrous filament.

Specimens examined : Kalamata in Akola district, Maharashtra, August 28th, 1977, *S. Y. Kamble* 150188, deposited in Western Circle Herbarium (BSI) Pune.

Alectra thompsoni Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. 4 : 297. 1884 : Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 2 : 681. 1957. (Repr. ed.)

An erect parasitic herb under *Barleria* species, up to 60.0 cm tall ; stem dark purple, turning black on drying, hispidulous, angular. Rhizome orange red, without scales. Floral leaves scale like, sparsely serrate, elliptic-ovate to linear-lanceolate. Racemes terminal, branched. Flowers pedicelled, subaxillary ; bracteoles two, linear, hispidulous. Corolla yellow, streaked with brown to red ; lobes usually five. Calyx campanulate, persistant, usually with five unequal lobes. Stamens four to five ; filaments prominently ciliate ; style simple ; stigma tongue-shaped. Ovary glabrous with axile placentation. Capsule a little broader than long with persistant calyx. Seeds numerous, cuneiform (Figs. 1 to 9).

This species closely resembles *A. parasitica* A. Rich. but differs in having hairy filaments and branched inflorescence.

Fls. & Frts. : August-November.

Specimens examined : Shahanur in Akola Dist., Maharashtra, September 6th 1977, *S. Y Kamble* 150497, deposited in Western Circle Herbarium (BSI) Pune.

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