PHALAENOPSIS CORNU-CERVI (BREDA) BL. & RECHB. F. — AN ORCHID RECORD FROM THE TROPICAL RAIN FOREST OF ASSAM (INDIA)

A field collection to Cachar, Assam helps to report one intertropical orchid having flattened rachis, clasping at the breast height of *Saraca asoca* (Roxb.) D. Willde, which later could be identified as *Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi* Bl. & Rechb. f. A record of its occurrence at Bhuban hills, Cachar, Assam is a further extension to the available distribution data (Holttum 1957 ; Backer *et al* 1958 ; Sweet 1969). Though, Pradhan (1981) reported this species for Northern India, but the report seems to be cursory and vague in providing authentic informations about its precise locality, date of collections, collector's name etc.

The rarity of species claims its conservation in situ as the species is noticed to loose its ecological optimum in the area of collection due to biotic interference. On account of its reduced range of distribution and to record its reproductive biology along with other periodical phenomena as flowering etc. of the species in respect to our country, a description with illustrations, based on the living material is given.

Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi 1*, 2** (Breda) Bl. & Rechb. f. in Hamb. Gartenz. 16 : 116. 1860. *Polychilos cornu-cervi* Breda in Kuhl & van Hasselt, Gen. et Sp. Orchid, t. 1. 1827. *Polystylus cornu-cervi* Hassk. in Natuurk. Tijdschr. Nederl. Indie 10 : 3. 1856. *Phalaenopsis devriesiana* Rechb. f. in Hamb. Gartenz. 16 : 116. 1860.

Epiphytic with profused fleshy, flexuous, often branched, glabrous roots. *Stem* short,



Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi (Breda) Bl. & Rechb. f.

Figs. 1-7. : 1. Habit. 2. Sepals and Petals. 3. Flower without sepals and petals. 4. Lip spread out. 5. Column. 6. Pollinia. 7. Front and lateral views of anther (magnified).

Inset map at the top indicates the present distribution.

*1. While citing the name of the taxon, it is noticed that some of the earlier published literatures (Hooker 1890 ; Grant 1895) as well as the herbarium materials deposited in the Central National Herbarium (CAL) from Burma, Malaya Peninsula and Malesian Islands misinterpreted by mentioning Par. & Rechb. f. as the authors of first valid publication, whereas the name was first validly published after the authorities Bl. & Rechb. f., which is correct for the taxon.

**2. The Orchids of Burma (1895) refers C. P. 54 in citing the species is confusing as the number relates to a leguminosae plant (Thwaites 1864).

enclosed by imbricating leaf sheaths. *Leaves* 15.5-21.5 × 3.0-3.5 cm, leathery, thick, coriaceous, cuneate, oblong-lanceolate, obtuse to acute, apex oblique. *Inflorescence* 8.0-24.0 cm long, 1-4, arising from the side of stem, erect ; *peduncle* 3.5-11.5 cm, terete with 1-2 cauline sheaths ; *rachis* 3.5-12.5 cm, simple or branched, flattened, broader than the peduncle, sinuous, several flowered. *Bracts* 0.2-0.35 × 0.15-0.2 cm, alternate, distichous, ovate-cucullate, hamate. *Flowers* 3.0-5.5 cm across at mouth, in 2 opposite rows, succedaneous, greenish yellow with reddish brown bars and blotches ; *sepals* lanceolate, acute, carinate towards apex, 7-nerved, greenish yellow flushed with reddish brown bars and blotches ; *dorsal* 1.7-2.2 × 0.55-0.75 cm, oblong-lanceolate ; *laterals* 1.8-2.3 × 0.7-0.8 cm, elliptic lanceolate, slightly falcate ; *petals* 0.9-1.5 × 0.45-0.55 cm, lanceolate, acute to subacute, 7-nerved ; *lip* 0.8-0.85 × 0.10-0.15 cm (width across lateral lobes) & 0.8-0.85 cm (width across midlobe), fleshy, 3-lobed, narrow at base, creamy white, continuous with column ; *lateral lobes* porrect, subquadrate, truncate apex, callus at base ; *midlobe* arrow shaped, apiculate, lateral arms erose dentate ; *disc* with 3 appendages in between the base of lateral lobes, the first creamy white, small ; the second yellowish, long pointed, forked ; the third pinkish red, oblong, broaden towards base, laterally flattened, extending on to the midlobe. *Column* 0.8-1.0 cm long, semiterete, curved, with 2 basal lobes ; *anther* incumbent, 2-celled ; pollinia 2, waxy, obovoid, bipartite, attached to ligulate caudicle. *Capsule ca* 8.0 cm long, 6 ridged, often with remnant of perianths.

Flowering and fruiting : Sept.-Oct.

Distribution and Ecology : Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Sarawak, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and India.

Exists in a well stratified forest with diversity of species, interferred by economic crop development.

Specimens studied : ASSAM : Cachar District : Bhuban Hills, 8th September 1978, *R. B. Majumder & D. P. Dam* 73081 (ASSAM).

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D. P. DAM AND SMT. N. DAM

Botanical Survey of India, Shillong

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