BULL. BOT. SURV. INDIA
Vol. 23, Nos. 3 & 4 : pp. 237-239, 1981

RARE AND LITTLE-KNOWN ORCHIDS FROM THE ERSTWHILE PRESIDENCY OF MADRAS

N. C. RATHAKRISHNAN**

Botanical Survey of India, Allahabad

Peninsular India is possibly the second richest area in Orchid-species, after the Eastern Himalayas. C. E. C. Fischer (1928) in Gamble's *Flora of the Presidency of Madras* reported 197 species of orchids. Several of these species have not been collected after their first collections and on several others there is only scanty information.

In this paper, for 42 rare and little-known orchids representing 23 genera, are listed, in view of their significance in conservation.

The correct names are enumerated in alphabetical sequence and synonyms as appeared in Gamble's *Flora of the Presidency of Madras* (1928), wherever necessary, are given. An asterisk indicates the desideratum of the specimens for the respective species in MH. Localities hitherto known for all the species and comments for some of them are provided.

***Acampe congesta** (Lindl.) Lindl.

Malabar (Northern districts of Kerala).

***Anoectochilus rotundifolius** (Blatt.) Balak.

(*Odontochilus rotundifolius* Blatt.)

High Wavy Mountains (Ghats of Madurai Dt.).

Not located after the type. Blatter (1928) states, "Described from one specimen which we found in damp evergreen forest"

***Brachycorythis wightii** Summerh.

Trivandrum.

The petals of this species are free from the dorsal sepal whereas they are adnate to the dorsal sepal in the other two species of South India, viz. *B. iantha* (Wight) Summerh. and *B. splendida* Summerh.

***Cheirostylis parvifolia** Lindl.

Nadugani (Tirunelveli Dt.).

Chiloschista pusilla (Willd.) Schltr.

Cochin, Ponmudi (Trivandrum Dt.), Wynaad (Calicut Dt.).

***Chrysoglossum hallbergii** Blatt.

High Wavy Mountains (Ghats of Madurai Dt.).

***Cirrhopetalum acutiflorum** (A. Rich.) Hook. f.

Nilgiris.

***C. aureum** Hook. f.

Wynaad (Calicut Dt.).

J. D. Hooker (1890) described this only on Jerdon's drawing. No plant fitting the description has been so far collected.

C. elegantulum Rolfe

Coorg, Nilgiris.

** Present address : Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore-3.

***Cirrhopetalum nodosum** Rolfe

Coorg, Nilgiris.

***Dendrobium aphyllum** (Roxb.) Fischer

Coorg, Madugala (Visakhapatnam Dt.).

***D. bicameratum** Lindl.

Mahendragiri (Ganjam Dt.).

***Diplocentrum congestum** Wight

Iyamalai hills (Ghats of Malappuram Dt.).

The specimens determined by Fischer in MH are not identical with *D. congestum* and the diagnostic characters given by him also support this view. A critical study is needed. It may prove to be a new species.

Epipactis wallichii Schltr.

(*E. consimilis* Wall. ex Hook. f., non D. Don)

Devala (Nilgiri Dt.).

***Eria pseudo-clavicaulis** Blatt.

High Wavy Mountains.

Not located after the type. Blatter (1928) states, "Described from one specimen which was brought to Bombay where it flowered in the beginning of September, 1917".

***Eulophia cullenii** (Wight) Bl.

Anamalais (Coimbatore Dt.), Pulneys (Madurai Dt.), Travancore.

***E. herbacea** Lindl.

Bababudan hills (Chikamagalur Dt.).

E. macrostachya Lindl.

Courtallam (Tirunelveli Dt.), Burliar (Nilgiri Dt.).

***E. ochreata** Lindl.

Visakhapatnam hills.

***Habenaria denticulata** Reichb. f.

Nilgiris.

H. diphylla Dalz.

Malabar (Northern districts of Kerala).

***H. macrostachya** Lindl.

Anamalais (Coimbatore Dt.).

J. D. Hooker (1890) includes this species from the above mentioned locality, but Fischer makes no mention of it.

***H. polyodon** Hook. f.

(*H. fimbriata* Wight, non R. Br.)
Nilgiris.

***Liparis beddomei** Ridley

Shembaganur (Madurai Dt.).

L. biloba Wight.

Kollimund, Ootacamund (Nilgiri Dt.).

L. elliptica Wight.

[*L. virdiflora* sensu Fischer, non (Bl.) Lindl.]
Coonoor (Nilgiri Dt.).

Fischer (1928) reduced *L. elliptica* to a synonym of *L. virdiflora*. Seidenfaden (1976) reinstates the former based on the recurved lip at the middle with ear-like marginal folds.

L. paradoxa (Lindl.) Reichb. f.

[*L. nervosa* sensu Fischer, non (Thumb.) Lindl.]

Biligirangan hills (Mysore Dt.).

Fischer (1928) considers this species conspecific with *L. nervosa* (Thumb.) Lindl. But Seidenfaden (1976) separates it by "the spathulate petals with three veins from the base" as against "the linear petals with one unbranched vein" in *L. nervosa*.

***Oberonia recurva** Lindl.

Travancore.

***Paphiopedilum druryi** (Bedd.) Stein

Agastyamalai, Kalakad hills (Tirunelveli Dt.).

Phalaenopsis decumbens (Griff.) Holttum

[*Kingiella decumbens* (Griff.) Rolfe]
Circars, Quilon.

Peristylus brachyphyllus A. Rich.

Bababudan hills (Chikmagalur Dt.), Kundha (Nilgiri Dt.).

***P. exilis** Wight

(*P. aristatus* sensu Fischer, non Lindl.) Courtallam (Tirunelveli Dt.), Kodaikanal (Madurai Dt.).

Seidenfaden (1977) reinstates *P. exilis* as a distinct species. The unique character is the globular spur which separates it from *P. aristatus* Lindl. which has fusiform spur.

P. secundus (Lindl.) Rathak.

(*P. lancifolius* sensu Fischer, non A. Rich.).

Habenaria robustior (Wight) Hook. f. is divided by Seidenfaden (1977) into three different entities, viz., *Peristylus robustior* Wight, *P. lancifolius* A. Rich. and *P. secundus* (Lindl.) Rathak. *P. robustior* Wight is merged with *P. richardianus* Wight and the other two species are retained as distinct species.

***P. stocksii** (Hook. f.) Kranzl.

Mysore.

***Taeniophyllum scaberulum** Hook. f.

Kottayam.

Tropidia curculigoides Lindl.

Quilon, Thirukurangudi (Tirunelveli Dt.).

***Vanda teres** (Roxb.) Lindl.

Visakhapatnam hills.

***V. wightii** Reichb. f.

Nilgiris.

Vanilla walkeriae Wight

Jerganhalli (Mysore Dt.), Paralai (Nilgiri Dt.), Quilon.

***V. wightiana** Lindl. ex Hook. f.

Trivandrum.

Zeuxine gracilis (Breda) Bl.

(*Z. blatteri* Fischer).

High Wavy Mountains (Ghats of Madurai Dt.), Sultan's Battery (Calicut Dt.).

REFERENCES

BLATTER, E. A list of orchids with some new species from the High Wavy Mountain (Madurai District). *Journ. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 32 : 518-523. 1928.

FISCHER, C. E. C. 'Orchidaceae' in J. S. Gamble, Flora of the Presidency of Madras pt. 8 : 1399-1478. London. 1928.

HOOKER, J. D. The Flora of British India 5 : 667-858 ; 6 : 1-198. Kent. 1890.

SEIDENFADEN, G. Orchid genera in Thailand. *Dansk Bot. Arkiv* 31(1) : 9-98. 1976 ; 31(3) : 27-138. 1977 ; 32(2) : 78-93, 108-113. 1978