STROBILANTHES WALKERI ARN. EX NEES (ACANTHACEAE)—A NEW RECORD FOR INDIA FROM NILGIRIS

During botanical explorations in Eastern slopes of the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu (Madras State), South India, a species of *Strobilanthes* Bl. (Acanthaceae) was collected in the Kunjapanai R. F. at an altitude of 1100 m. After a critical study, and by comparison with Ceylon collections deposited in MH, it has been identified as *Strobilanthes walkeri* Arn. ex Nees. So far *Strobilanthes walkeri* Arn. ex Nees has not been reported from India, though R. H. Beddome (1874) and J. D. Hooker (1884) have dealt with this species in their floras, based on the collections from Ceylon. Further it was regarded as endemic to Ceylon. The occurrence of this species in the Nilgiri Hills extends its distribution to S. India, suggesting phytogeographic affinities of these areas.

Strobilanthes walkeri Arn. ex Nees in Hook. Comp. Bot. Mag. 2: 312. 1836 & in DC. Prodr. 11: 181. 1847; T. Anders. in Thwaites Enum. 227. 1860 & in Journ. Linn. Soc. 9: 470. 1867; Bedd. Ic. Pl. Ind. Or. t. 222. 1874; Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India 4: 440. 1884; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 305. 1895.

Shrubs or undershrub of about 1.5 m high, having very variable leaves in size. Leaves are opposite, unequal, elliptic to ovate, densely lineolate above and scarious on both sides with bluntly serrate margins. Inflorescence in axillary and in terminal capitate cymes of 1-5, peduncles villous and thickened upwards. Flowers pink, 1-4 per head. Capsule ellipsoid and glabrous. Seeds 2, ovate and covered with adpressed silky hairs.

For detailed description and figures of this species, Beddome (1874), Clarke (1884) and Trimen (1895) (*loc. cit.*) may be referred.

This species is allied to *S. thwaitesii* T. Anders. and *S. caudatus* T. Anders. but differs in having shorter corolla tube (upto only 1 cm long), while in the other two species corolla tube is always longer than 1.5 cm.

According to C. E. B. Bremekamp [Verh. Nederl. Akad. Wet. II 41 (1): 1-306. 1944], the genus *Strobilanthes* Bl. *emend.* Breme... does not occur in India; its distribution is restricted only to "Sumatra and Java". The numerous species treated under *Strobilanthes* Bl. (*sensu lato*) in Indian floras fall under many smaller genera which are recognised by Bremekamp. He, however, was not able to place *"Strobilanthes walkeri* Arn. ex Nees" in any of the described genera, as is evident from his remark (*loc. cit.* p. 287) *"genus adhuc incertum"*.

Specimens examined: TAMIL NADU: Nilgiri District, Towards Jakkanery, Kunjapanai R. F., 1100 m, 25-11-1970, *Vajravelu* 37053. CEYLON: "Ceylon, 4000 to 7000 ft." *Beddome s.n.*, acc. No. 61526; C.P. 3517; *Herb. Wight.* acc. Nos. 61523 & 61527 (All in MH).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are thankful to Dr. J. Joseph, Regional Botanist and Dr. A. N. Henry, Systematic Botanist, Botanical Survey of India, Southern Circle, Coimbatore for going through the manuscript as well as for their valuable suggestions.

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