ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *LEPIDIUM RUDERALE* LINN. AND *LEPIDIUM VIRGINICUM* LINN. (BRASSICACEAE) IN SOUTH INDIA

The genus *Lepidium* Linn. is so far known to be represented in South India by only *Lepidium sativum* Linn., which is usually a cultivated species. In the course of the plant exploration work of Shevaroy Hills, Salem District, Tamil Nadu, one of us (D.S.P.) came across naturalised populations of two more species of this genus. These weeds attain a height up to 45 cm and were found occurring along the road sides and in waste places, near Yercaud. These were identified as *Lepidium ruderale* Linn. and *Lepidium virginicum* Linn. with the help of the available literature (Babu, 1966; Babu & Biswas, 1970 and Munz & Keck, 1959) and the identities were confirmed by sending the specimens to the Central National Herbarium, Howrah (CAL) and to the Botanical Survey of India, Northern Circle Herbarium, Dehra Dun (BSD), respectively.

Lepidium ruderale Linn. Sp. Pl. 645. 1753 (*non sensu* Hook. f. et Anders. 1872); Vasconcellos in Fl. Europea 1: 232. 1964.

This taxon is a native of Europe, introduced and naturalised in North America. The earlier collections of it in India are only from Konnagar, Hooghly in West Bengal (Babu & Biswas, 1970).

Specimens examined: Salem, Yercaud, Lady Seat Road, ± 1340 m, 8th April, 1972, *D. S. Pandey* 41266 (MH).

Lepidium virginicum Linn. Sp. Pl. 645. 1753.

This North American species is a recent introduction to India. It was reported for the first time from Dehra Dun (Babu, 1966) and is known to be widely distributed in the Western Himalayas up to an altitude of 2400 m.

Specimens examined: Salem, Yercaud, Lady Seat Road, ± 1340 m, 26th January, 1972, *D. S. Pandey* 41250 (MH) and 2nd March, 1972, *D. S. Pandey* 41254 (MH).

The above two taxa are often seen to be growing together at Yercaud, but can easily be distinguished as follows:

Flowers apetalous; cotyledons incumbent; radical leaves pinnatisect to pinnatifid, on long petioles, serrate to dentate; lower cauline leaves lanceolate, obtuse or sub-acute at apex, serrate to pinnatifid; upper cauline leaves linear lanceolate, entire ...	*L. ruderale*
Flowers with four petals, equal to or slightly longer than the sepals; cotyledons accumbent, radical leaves incised to pinnate; cauline leaves incised ...	*L. virginicum*

Reference may be made to Babu (1966), Babu & Biswas (1970) and Munz & Keck (1959) for detailed descriptions and to Butcher (1961), Fitch (1949) and Tomitaro (1949) for illustrations of the two species.

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