38. A NEW VARIETY OF *TRICHOSANTHES TRICUSPIDATA* LOUR. (CUCURBITACEAE) FROM INDIA

Trichosanthes tricuspidata Lour., (Family Cucurbitaceae), is distributed almost throughout India (including the Andaman Islands), Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka (Chakravarty, *Rec. Bot. Surv. India* 17:44. 1959 & *Fasc. Fl. India* 11:109. 1983). The lower surface of the lamina in this species has been described by earlier taxonomists as glabrous or tomentose. In *T. tricuspidata* var. *tricuspidata* the lower surface of the lamina is glabrous, whereas in *T. tricuspidata* var. *tomentosa* (Heyne ex Clarke) Kumari, the lower surface of the lamina bears tomentose hairs. In both these taxa, the upper surface of the lamina, however, bears strigose hairs which grow sparsely or densely.

While examining a large number of specimens of *T. tricuspidata* var. *tricuspidata* and var. *tomentosa* deposited in Central National Herbarium (CAL), together with our present collections from the districts of Coochbehar, and North Dinajpur (West Bengal) we observed the following features:

i) Upper surface of the lamina is always with strigose hairs in all the specimens examined.

ii) Lower surface of the lamina is glabrous in var. *tricuspidata.*

iii) Lower surface of the lamina is tomentose in var. *tomentosa.*

iv) Lower surface of the lamina is strigose all over or only on the nerves in some of the specimens.

No other deviation has been observed in the floral morphology or other vegetative characters of these taxa.

In our opinion the presence of "strigose" hairs on the lower laminar surface densely or sparsely on the nerves is of taxonomic importance. Based on this character, we are describing here a new variety.

Trichosanthes tricuspidata Lour. var. *strigosa* Mitra & Bandyop. var. nov.

Foliis subter nervi et superficies constanter vetalus cum scabris strigosus; differt *Trichosanthes tricuspidata* Lour. var. *tricuspidata* et *T. tricuspidata* Lour. var. *tomentosa* (Heyne ex Clarke) Kumari

Holotype: West Bengal; Coochbehar (Jamalda), 22.viii.1995, coll. S. Bandyopadhyay 2904 (CAL)

Paratypus: Andhra Pradesh: Rampa district, 3.x.1920, Narayanswami 434 (CAL).

Arunachal Pradesh: 1961, Rao 24670 (CAL).

Bihar: 9.i.1903, Hains 587 (CAL); Champaran dist. 17.ix.1965, Banerjee 590 (CAL).

Karnataka: Mysore dist. Spet. 1910, Meebold 11301 (CAL); Agumbe dist. (Ghat Road), 13.x.1962, Raghaban 83179 (CAL); Hassan dist. 27.vii. Saldanha 8507 (CAL).

Kerala: 1981, Mohan 72172 (CAL); Trichur district, 5.ii.1984, Ram Murthy 72792 (CAL).

Madhya Pradesh: Bustar dist. 1.ix.1964, Aroh 5694 (CAL).

Maharashtra: Poona dist. 28.ix.1964 Venkata Reddi 98788 (CAL).

Manipur: Sengmoi (3000 ft.), 20.v.1882, Watt 7162 (CAL); on the way to Keithemabi (3000 ft.), 4.ii.1881 Watt 5831 (CAL); Naga hills (5000 ft), 7.vii.1948, Mukherjee 3169 (CAL); Nungba,?. .xi.1907, Meebold 5875 (CAL).

Meghalaya: Khasia & Jaintia hills, 13.x.1910, Hoopa 34686 (CAL); Khasia hills (5500 ft.), 29.viii.1885, Clarke 40292 (CAL); Khasia hills, Griffith 2539 (CAL); Shillong, 3.vi.1963, Deka 3314 (CAL).

NEFA: 1961, Deb 26051 (CAL); 19.x.1959, Rao 20045 (CAL); 22.viii.1958, Panigrahi 14568. (CAL).

Orissa: Mayurbhanj district, 23.iii.79, Biswas, (CAL); 1983, Safui 13500 (CAL).

Tamil Nadu: Tinnevelly (200 m), 23.iii.1958, Subramanyam 5634 (CAL).

West Bengal: Birbhum, 28 Aug. 1966, Basak 594 (CAL); Darjeeling (6500 ft), 5.vii.1956, Chatterjee 24 (CAL); Darjeeling (4000 ft) 28.vii.1870, Clarke 12243 (CAL); Howrah 26.viii.1964, Bennet 969 (CAL); Malda, 1966, Dutta 350 (CAL).

Purulia, 20.iv.1968, Malik 546 (CAL); West Dinajpur (Chopra), 22.viii.1995, Mitra 2449 (CAL).

Bangladesh: Jessore, 1874, Clarke 21811 (CAL).

Myanmar: Upper Burma, ?.vii.1888, Khan 130 (CAL).

Nepal: 1951, Williams 5202 (CAL).

Trichosanthes tricuspidata Lour. var. *strigosa* var. nov. differs from the related taxa *T. tricuspidata* Lour. var. *tricuspidata* and *T. tricuspidata* Lour. var. *tomentosa* (Heyne ex Clarke) Kumari by the presence of strigose hairs on the lower laminar surface all over, densely or only on the nerve sparsely.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, NEFA, Orissa, Tamil Nadu & West Bengal, India; Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal.

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December 23, 1997 S. MITRA
S. BANDYOPADHYAY
Dept. of Botany,
University of Kalyani, Nadia.

39. A NEW RECORD OF *THRIXSPERMUM MERGUENSE* (HOOK.F.) KUNTZE (ORCHIDACEAE) FROM NICOBAR ISLANDS

The genus *Thrixspermum* Lour. with an estimated number of species between 100 to 150 (Seidenfaden, 1992) in the world is represented by only eight species in India (Karthikeyan *et al*, 1989; Sathish Kumar and Manilal, 1994; Seidenfaden, 1992) after *T. album* is considered conspecific with *T. trichoglottis* by Holttum and with the relationship of this taxon to a series of taxa, especially the classical *T. hystrix,* remaining unresolved.

T. merquense (Hook.f.) Kuntze, hitherto known to be distributed from Myanmar (Tenasserim) eastwards to Taiwan and the Philippines, as well as Sumatra, Java and Krakatau, is being reported here from Nicobar Is. after the identification of the specimen is confirmed on the basis of the illustrations and literature (Seidenfaden, 1992). With this new report, the total number of species so far known to occur in Andaman and Nicobar Is. is three, the other two being *T. trichoglottis* and *T. amplexicaule.* A brief description of the orchid species is provided below to facilitate easy collection and identification in the field.

Thrixspermum merguense (Hook.f.) Kuntze, Rev. Gen 2: 682, 1891.

Sarcochilus merguense Hook.f. t Fl. Brit. India 6: 401 1890.

Small epiphytic plants; stem up to 1 cm long, clothed with the imbricating bases of the distichous leaves. Roots wiry. Leaves up to 3.5 x 1.0 cm, retuse. Inflorescence almost as long as leaves; rachis 1 cm long. Bracts closely arranged, triangular, acute, up to 1 mm long. Dorsal sepal up to 2.5 mm long. Petals slightly smaller. Lip with tufts of hairs at the distal end, and one tuft centrally located; the side lobes broadly triangular. Column up to 1 mm long, narrowing towards the base. Fruit not seen.

Specimens examined: Andaman-Nicobar Islands: Great Nicobar island, 41 km from Campbell Bay on north-south road along the Galathea river, 7.iv.1995, Coll. V. Maina and B. K. Sinha 20599 (PBL).



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