NOTE

TWO ADDITIONS TO THE FLORA OF THE PALNI HILLS, SOUTHERN INDIA

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During a botanical exploration (2013–2015) of the Palni Hills of the Western Ghats (Fig. 1), Tamil Nadu the authors collected two rare plant specimens, which after a critical study and perusal of published literature (Hooker 1874; Gamble 1957; Dassanayake 1991; Srivastava 1997) were identified as *Hiptage parvifolia* Wight & Arn. (Malpighiaceae) and *Kalanchoe olivacea* Dalz. & Gibs. (Crassulaceae) that have not been reported earlier from Palni region (Fyson 1932; Gamble 1957; Nair & Henry 1983; Matthew 1999). Hence, our collections form new distributional records for the Palni Hills. A brief description, distribution, photographs and detailed illustrations are provided for their easy identification.

**Malpighiaceae**

*Hiptage parvifolia*

Wight & Arn. Prodr. 107. 1834; Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 1: 419. 1874; Srivastava, Flora of India 4: 24. 1997 (Image 1 a,b & 2; Fig. 2).

Climbing shrub, up to 3m; branches and shoots elongate. Leaves ovate oblong, 6–8 × 2.5–3.5 cm, coriaceous, glabrous, base acute, margin entire, apex acuminate; petioles ca. 7mm long, glabrescent. Racemes axillary, 6–7 cm long, appressed pubescent; peduncles 0.5–2 cm; bracts ca. 1.5mm; bracteoles minute; pedicels ca. 2cm long, articulate at about 0.8cm below calyx. Flowers ca. 1cm across. Calyx lobes ovate obtuse, 2.5–4 × 2.5–3 mm, persistent, outer pubescent, inner glabrous; glands ovoid, ca. 3mm long. Petals 5,
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white, one with yellow blotch, orbicular, 7–8 × 7–8 mm, outer surface pubescent, clawed, fringed at margins. Stamens 10, declinate, unequal; longer ones to 7 mm; others 5 mm; filaments conuate at base; anthers ovoid, ca. 1 mm long. Ovary 3 lobed, 3-celled; ovule 1 per cell; Style 1–1.5 cm long; stigma capitate. Samaras light brown; median wing obovate, rounded at apex, 2–2.5 × 0.8–1 cm; lateral wings elliptic, 1–1.5 × 4.5 mm.

Specimens examined: 2058 (SICBOT), 20.iii.2015, on the way to Kukkal Shola from Kuthiraiyar Dam, Tamil Nadu, India, 10°22'11.48"N & 77°22'13.18"E at 525 m, coll. S. Soosairaj & P. Raja (Image 2).

Flowering & Fruiting: February–May

Habitat & Ecology: Species is located along the stream and are associated with Alphonsea sclerocarpa Thwaites, Putranjiva roxburghii Wall. and Commiphora caudata (Wight & Arn.) Engl.

Distribution: India (Meghalaya, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala), Sri Lanka and Timor.

Notes: The genus Hiptage Gaertner is represented by about 30 species distributed in western China, Subtropical Asia, Taiwan, Malay and the Pacific islands. In India, Srivastava (1997) has reported nine species of Hiptage of which five are endemic to India. In Tamil Nadu, Gamble (1957) recorded it from the southern Western Ghats of Tirunelveli District. In the present study, only two individuals were located.

IUCN status: Not evaluated

Crassulaceae

Kalanchoe olivacea

Dalzell & Gibbs. Bombay Fl. 313.1861; Fischer in Rec. Bot. Surv. India 9: 78. 1921; Gamble Fl. Pres. Madras 1: 319. 1957 (repr. ed.). (Image 1c & 3; Fig. 3)

Semi succulent erect herb, up to 30 cm. Leaves decussate, obovate, sessile, 8–11 × 3–6 cm, thick coriaceous, greenish-red, glabrous, base narrowed, margins crenate, apex obtuse, red-dotted. Cymes dense, corymbose, ca. 4 cm, terminal; bracts foliar; bracteoles linear, 5–7 mm; peduncles, 2–3 cm, many flowered, glandular hairs; pedicels ca. 1.2 cm. Calyx tube lobed to the base; lobes 4, lanceolate ca. 7 mm, glandular pubescent, acuminate. Corolla white, flask-shaped; petals 4 lobed, connate, lobes ca. 7 mm, ovate-lanceolate, apiculate, tube ca. 11×3 mm, inner glabrous, outer glandular pubescent. Stamens 4+4, inserted above the swollen base of corolla, 8–1.2 mm, anther ca. 1 mm, apiculate. Pistils ca. 1 cm; carpels 4, free, surrounded by 4 linear hypogynous scales ca. 3.3 mm long, 2 fid at apex styles 4, stout; stigmas oblique. Follicles ca. 8×3.5 mm, glabrous.

Figure 1. Map showing the Palni Hills of Western Ghats

Specimens examined: 2030 (SJCBO), Thonimalai, Kannivadi, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu, India, 10°21.4892’N & 77°44.1683’E at 1,370m, 26.i.2015, coll. S. Soosairaj & P. Raja (Image 3).

Flowering & Fruiting: December and March

Distribution: India: Peninsular (Endemic to the Western Ghats); rare, among grassy slopes.


Notes: Gamble (1957) reported this species from the Anamalai Hills of Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu. Later, Sasidharan (1999, 2002) reported it from Palakad and Idukki districts of Kerala. The present collection forms a first report in the Palni Hills of Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu.

IUCN status: Not evaluated

Reference


Figure 3. *Kalanchoe olivacea* Dalz. & Gibbs.

a - flowering twig; b - flower; c - bracteole; d - corolla splitopen; e&f - calyx lobe; g - corolla lobe; h - stamen; i - hypogynous scale; j - pistill


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