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ARTICLE TYPE

Report on the extended distribution of an endemic plant *Pancratium sanctae-mariae* (Amaryllidaceae) in the Eastern Ghats, India

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Abstract

Pancratium sanctae-mariae Blatt. & Hallb. is reported here as a new addition to the Flora of Eastern Ghats, India, based on the collection from Visakhapatnam district. Detailed description, notes and photo plate are provided for easy identification.

Keywords: Andhra Pradesh, Araku valley, New distributional record, Note.

Introduction

The genus *Pancratium* L. is represented by *c.* 24 species, mainly distributed in the Canary Islands, West Africa, Mediterranean, and Namibia to Malesia (POWO, 2022). In India, the genus represented by 12 species (Mao & Dash, 2020), excluding the recently described *P. venkaiahii* R. Prameela et al. from Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh (Prameela et al., 2022).

While exploring the Amaryllids of Andhra Pradesh, first author has collected an interesting plant, which on pursuance of literature (Sadasivaiah & Karuppusamy, 2018) identified as *Pancratium sanctae-mariae* Blatt. & Hallb. This species is believed to be endemic to Western Ghats (Karnataka and Maharashtra) (Mao & Dash, 2022) hitherto not reported from eastern ghats of India (Pullaiah and Karuppusamy, 2020). Hence, the distributional range extension of the species is reported here as an addition to the flora of Eastern Ghats. The detailed description, a short note and a photo plate are provided here to facilitate easy identification.

Taxonomic treatment

Pancratium sanctae-mariae Blatt. & Hallb. in J. Indian Bot. 2: 52.1921; Mao & Dash, Fl. Pl. India Annot. Checkl. Monocot. 144. 2020 Figure 1

Perennial herbs with tunicate bulbs; bulbs globose, 3.5–6 cm across; neck cylindric, 2–6 cm long. Roots arising from the margin of the basal disc. Leaves, 7–8, linear - lanceolate, 18–33 × 1–2.2 cm, narrowed towards base, entire along margins, acute at apex. Scapes slender, green, compressed, 2–5 - flowered, 7–20 × 0.5–0.8 cm long; spathe single, broadly ovate, 2.5–3 cm long, forked, with acuminate lobes, transparent; pedicels 0.5–3 cm long, angular. Flowers white, fragrant, 5 cm wide. Perianth tube erect, 5.5–6 cm long; lobes linear lanceolate, 3–4.5 × 0.3–0.7 cm, awl shaped tip, green, *c.* 0.2 cm long. Staminal cup cylindrical, 1.5 - 2.5 cm long, 0.6–0.8 cm wide with 12 bifid teeth between filaments; teeth 0.2–0.3 cm long; filaments as long as the tooth of staminal cup, 0.2–0.3 cm long; anthers dorsifixed, linear (at opening time) and falcate (at dehiscent time) 0.8–1 cm long, versatile. Ovary 3-locular, ellipsoid, 0.8–1.3 × 0.4–0.5 cm, green; ovules *c.* 6 in each locule, placentation axile; style filiform 4–6 cm long, included; stigma capitate. Capsules not seen.

Flowering and Fruiting

March – September.

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Fig. 1: A)& B) Habit; C) Bulb with disc; D) Awl shaped tips; E) Staminal cup with 12 teeth; F) Falcate nthers; G) Inflorescence; H) Flower showing cylindrical cup, linear anther & included style; I) Included style

Habitat

Rare on forest floors of the semievergreen forest.

Distribution

Endemic to Karnataka and Maharashtra (Mao & Dash, 2022), now from Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh.

Specimens examined

Andhra Pradesh, Visakhapatnam, Araku valley, Chinalabudu, *R. Prameela* RP 23393 A.U. (AUV).

Notes

The species is often confused with Dalzell's species *P. parvum* Dalzell by its habit and inflorescence, but easily differentiated by its included style and shorter perianth tube. Generally, the pedicel of the flower up to 1 cm long but in the present collection up to 3 cm long pedicel has been observed. As per the protologue, the perianth tube is 2.5 cm long but 5.5 - 6 cm long tube was observed.

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