

TAXONOMIC OBSERVATIONS OF *IPHIGENIA MAGNIFICA* ANSARI ET ROLLA RAO

D.A. PATIL

P.G. Department of Botany, L.K. Dr. P.R. Ghogrey Science College, Dhule-424 005 (M.S.)
(Accepted March, 1997)

Some critical comments on the taxonomy of *Iphigenia magnifica* are provided in the present paper.

Key Words : Taxonomy, *Iphigenia magnifica*.

The genus *Iphigenia* Kunth (Liliaceae) consists of four species distributed in India, Africa, Australia and Philippines (Hooker, 1892; Duthie, 1960). Hooker (*loc. cit.*) records two species for the then British India under this genus. Recently, Karthikeyan *et al.* (1989) enlisted total six species for India. Ansari and Rolla Rao (1978) founded a new species *I. magnifica*. Based on present author's study and observations on it for over a decade in Dhule district some critical comments are provided as follows :

1. The holotype of *I. magnifica* Ansari *et* Rao was collected by Pataskar (Pataskar 118218 A) from Dhule on 5-10-1969 and deposited in CAL. The isotypes 118218 B and C were deposited in BSI, while 118218 D and 118218 E in CAL and K respectively.
2. The paratypes were also collected from Dhule on 8-9-1970 and deposited in BSI (Ansari 104945).
3. The founding authors did not indicate the specimen on which the illustration was based (Plate I, *Bull. Bot. Surv. India* Vol. 20, Page 162, 1978).
4. The dates of collections indicate that these collectors and/or authors visited the type locality only in the months of September and October and not during June to August.
5. They split the common *I. indica* (Linn.) A. Gray and their new species, *I. magnifica* formed a part of it. They also illustrated and described this new species.
6. (i) Ansari and Rolla Rao (*loc. cit.*) described the ovary in *I. indica* and *I. magnifica* as green. But the ovary is dark brown-purple turning green.

(ii) They described the pedicel in *I. magnifica* upto 5.5 cm in flowers and upto 9.0 cm in fruiting. But in the present study the pedicels are up to 8.5 cm in flowering and 11.0 cm in fruiting.

(iii) They mentioned the flowering and fruiting periods of both the species different (June to July and September to October for *I. indica* and *I. magnifica* respectively). But both these species flower and fruit more or less in the same period, usually June to October.

Duthie (1960) described *Iphigenia* spp. as hysteroanthus. However subsequent workers have proved it to be synanthus. The present study also demonstrates similarly, the flowering and fruiting periods for these species do not differ much as reported by Ansari and Rolla Rao (*op. cit.*)

(iv) It is also interesting to note that in both these taxa, one or two flower/s abscise and as a consequence, no fruit setting is observed on such pedicel/s.

Therefore, it is quite possible that the collections form a mixture of both species. But the species can be segregated in the field by their venation pattern. Leaves are mostly 9 to 11-nerved in *I. magnifica* and 5 to 7-nerved in *I. indica*. The stem is generally ridged and grooved in both species.

Iphigenia spp. are economically important as they are a source of colchicine. *I. magnifica* occurs along with *I. indica* in many areas and it is just possible that the collectors may have a mixture of both the species.

I am thankful to Professor Dr. T. Rajagopal, Department of Botany, Osmania University, for going through the manuscript and critical suggestions. I am grateful to Professor Dr. R.M. Pai, Ex-Head, Department of Botany, Dr. B.A. Marathwada University and Principal Shri B.M. Patil for encouragement and facilities respectively.

REFERENCES

Ansari M Y & R S Rao 1978 Two new species of the genus *Iphigenia* Kunth (Liliaceae) from western

ghats (India). *Bull Bot Surv India* **20** 162-164.

Duthie J F 1960 *Flora of the Upper Gangetic Plain and of the Adjacent Siwalik and Sub-Himalayan Tracts*. B S I (Repr ed) Calcutta, India.

Hooker J D 1892 (1894) *The Flora of British India*. Vol 6. Reeves & Co London.

Karthikeyan S, S K Jain M P Naydr & M Sanjappa 1989 *Florae Indicae Enumeratio Monocotyledonae*. B S I Calcutta, India.