

New Report of *Rhizophora stylosa* and *R. lamarckii* from the East Coast of Tamil Nadu

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Mangroves are essentially rich in the Old World with abundance of species between 75 E and 150 E. Many of the species are represented in the eastern coast of India. Tomlinson (1986) reports that *Aegiceras corniculatum* (L) Blanco "has a wide distribution from Ceylon (but not India) to South China through the Malay Archipelago to Polynesia and northeastern Australia as far south as New South Wales". This species occurs in Tamil Nadu, in abundance, along with *Rhizophora apiculata* and *R. mucronata*. Intensive field survey may bring to light several more species of the mangrove vegetation. Field studies made by me from 1982 to 1984 Pichavaram Reserve Forest, Cuddalore District, Tamil Nadu enabled me to record two species of *Rhizophora*, *R. stylosa* Griff and *R. Lamarckii* Montr. for the first time. The Pichavaram vegetation is dominated by *R. apiculata* Bl. and *R. mucronata* Lamk. *R. stylosa* has been reported from Orissa and recently Mall *et al.* (1985) have identified it from Andaman islands.

R. stylosa Griff is characterised by the floral axis branched more than twice. Flowers consist of wooly petals with conspicuous marginal hairs. Stamens mostly eight; stigma measure about 3-4 mm long. The species can be distinguished from *R. mucronata* by the broad leaves, inflorescence twice branched and almost sessile stigma of the latter.

Rhizophora Lamarckii Montr. produces flowers but does not proceed beyond blooming. It is a sterile hybrid of *R. apiculata* and *R. stylosa* (Tomlinson & Womersley 1976). It is believed to be

endemic to New Caladonia and subsequently is reported to occur in Queensland, New Herbrides, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (Duke & Bunt, 1979; Bunt *et al.*, 1982; Tomlinson & Womersley, 1976). Flowers generally occur in fours, sometimes in two, on a fairly stout peduncle. The marginal hairs on the petals are not much conspicuous. Stamens vary in number between 8 and 20 but mostly 16 style is 2-3 mm long. Although the species flowers profusely as do other species of *Rhizophora*, the development stops with blooming.

R. stylosa is reported for the first time from the coasts of Tamil Nadu. This is the first record of the occurrence of *R. lamarckii* anywhere outside Australian waters.

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