



MORINDA COREIA BUCH.-HAM. : A NEW RECORD TO THE FLORA OF RAJASTHAN

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Morinda coreia Buch.-Ham. of the family Rubiaceae, so far not reported from Rajasthan. Species is first time collected from Keli, Ata villages of Chittorgarh and Revara mahadev village, of district Pratapgarh, Rajasthan. The detail description, up to date nomenclature, time of flowering - fruiting, ecological notes and illustrations of this species have been presented.

Key words: *Morinda coreia*, New record, Rajasthan.

During botanical explorations in southern Rajasthan, the author collected some plant specimens from Chittorgarh and Pratapgarh districts of Rajasthan. After a thorough survey of literature, critical examination and expert opinion from BSI Howrah, these specimens determined as *Morinda coreia* Buch.-Ham., belonging to the family Rubiaceae, a taxon not recorded by the earlier workers from Rajasthan (Bhandari 1978, Sharma and Tiagi 1979, Shetty & Pandey 1983, Singh 1983, Shetty and Singh 1987, Prasad *et al.* 1996, Sharma, 2002 and Tiagi and Aery 2007). The present paper deals with the detailed description, phenological data and illustrations of the species.

The genus *Morinda* L. comprises about 80 species, distributed in the tropics of the world and represented by 8 species in India (Samvatsar 1996). *Morinda tomentosa* Heyne ex Roth. is the only species so far known to Rajasthan (Shetty and Singh 1987, Tiagi and Aery 2007), *Morinda coreia* Buch.-Ham. (an Indo-Malayan taxon, Mabberley 1997) is highly variable and widely distributed species in India (Rathna Kumari *et al.* 2002) so far known from Karnataka (Singh 1988), Madhya Pradesh (Samvatsar 1996). *Morinda coreia* Buch.-Ham. differs from allied species *M. tomentosa* Heyne

ex Roth. in leaves glabrous, rarely pubescent beneath and calyx truncate.

DESCRIPTION

Morinda coreia Buch.-Ham in Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. **13**: 537. 1822; Samvatsar, Fl. W. Madhya Pradesh. 150. 1996. *M. tinctoria* Roxb. (Hort. Beng. 15 1814 et) Fl. Indica **2**: 197. 1824; Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India **3**: 156. 1880; Singh in Fl. East. Karnataka **1**: 347. 1988. **Plate. 1 & 2.**

Medium-sized tree, up to 5 m tall. Branches quadrangular. Bark rough, fissured and somewhat corky, grayish-yellow. Branchlets often with a characteristic thin pallid to yellowish bark. Leaves simple, opposite, dark-green, elliptic-oblong, 6 - 14 x 3.5 - 10 cm, glabrous or slightly pubescent or only hairy in the axils underneath, acuminate at the apex, secondary nerves prominent, 4 - 9 pairs; petioles 2 cm long; stipules membranous, broad, entire or bifid, variable in size. Flowers white, several together united at the base into a small head; peduncles solitary, axillary, or leaf opposed, varying from 1.7 - 5.00 cm in length, slightly pubescent. Calyx coherent, limb short, truncate. Corolla 5 (6), white, tubular, funnel-shaped; tube 2 - 3 cm long, lobes oblong, hairy outside.



Plate 1 (Figures A - D)

A. Habit, B. Flowering branch, C. Corolla with visible style, D. Fruiting branch

Stamens 5 - 6; filaments short; anthers included in the tube or rarely exerted. Ovary 2-or spuriously 4-celled; style exerted, stigma 2-lobed. Fruits capsule, syncarpium of false berries due to coalescence of succulent calyx, 1.5 - 2.5 cm diam., including a number of hard, 1-seeded pyrenes. Seeds orbicular, flattened, usually 2 - 4 from each flower.

Ecological notes: Rare in the forest as well as wastelands, outskirts of forests associated with *Carissa congesta* Wight, etc.

Specimens examined: India, Rajasthan, Chittorgarh district, village Keli 20. 6. 08, village Ata, 19.7.08; Pratapgarh district, village Revera mahadev, Meena 271, 618; 822 (MLVGCB Herbarium).

Distribution : Indian peninsula, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Malaysia.

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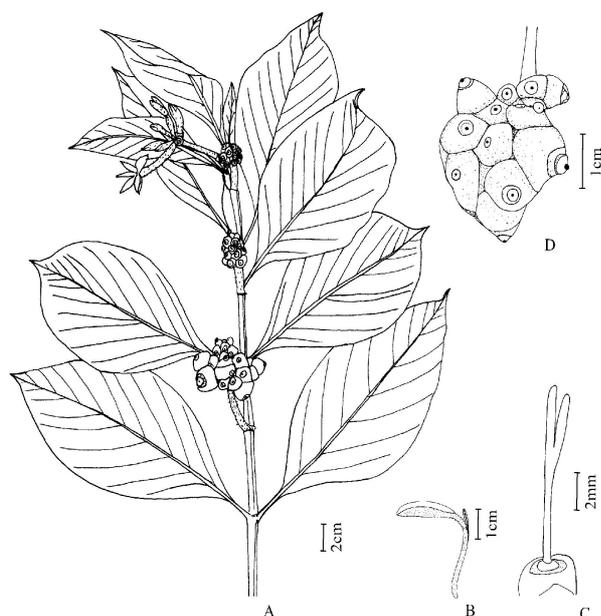


Plate 2 (Figures A - D)

A. Flowering and fruiting branch, B. Corolla and stamen, C. Gynoecium, D. Fruits

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