

DISTRIBUTION OF SOME RARE PLANTS ALONG SAURASHTRA COAST AND NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS

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IN the course of studies on the ecology of Saurashtra coast and neighbouring islands the writers collected a good number of plants of strand habitat, of which some of them were found to be new records and in some cases, their occurrence away from the places where they were originally collected is of distributional interest.

- (1) *Merremia quinquefolia* (L.) Hall. f. in *Bot. Jahrb.*, **16**, 552, 1893; Raizada and Vaid in *Indian For.*, **83**, 645.

Recently this plant was reported by Santapau and Patel in 1955 for the first time from Western India. In Saurashtra, its occurrence has been recorded at Okhamandal (Raizada and Vaid, 1951) Sassansir, Dwarka, Rajkot and also at Baroda in South Gujarat (Santapau and Patel, 1955). The present collection was made at Diu island near the fort area. The plant is a herbaceous climber found growing in abundance characterised by palmately compound leaves, white flowers and with straw-coloured globose capsules having brown or black seeds.

Diu island, T. A. Rao, 1990, 22-11-1962.

- (2) *Euphorbia heterophylla* L. in *Sp., Pl.* 453, 1753; Cooke, **2**, 571.

It is an introduced Mexican plant but it is reported to occur in Indian gardens or sometimes as an escape at Dharwar, Bombay gardens, Kirkee, Poona gardens by Santapau in 1954 and also in Bengal at Chandannagore by Prain in 1903. This plant has not been reported in any part of Saurashtra area as far as is known. The plant was found in Diu island especially near the fort area in abundance. An erect herb with characteristic red blotch at the base of the upper petioled leaves. Leaves are sinuate toothed, variable, ovate to fiddle-shaped and cyathia are borne in terminal cymes.

Diu island, T. A. Rao, 1975, 22-11-1962.

- (3) *Kedrostis rostrata* (Rottl.) Cogn. in *DC Mon. Phan.*, **3**, 636, 1881 et in *Pfreich.*, **56**, 142; Chakravarty in *Ind. Journ. Agric. Sci.* 16-76, and *Rec. Bot. Surv. India*, **17** (1), 166.

This climber was collected at the periphery of small islet Sani Mar Beyt near Beyt island growing in sandy rocky crevices. This interesting plant is a new record for Saurashtra area. Its occurrence had been mentioned in Gujarat area without precise locality. Recently, the plant has been collected by Santapau in 1960 on Meroli plateau in Khandala area.

The interesting feature of this plant is its fruit which is more or less flask-shaped, glabrous at a late stage and with a long curved beak.

Sani Mar Beyt island, **T. A. Rao, 1914, 17-11-1962.**

- (4) *Portulaca tuberosa* Roxb. in *Hort. Beng.*, 91, 1814 (*nom. nud.*) and *Fl. Ind.*, **2**, 464, 1832; *FBI*, **1**, 247; Santapau, *Fl. Saur.*, **1**, 27.

The tuberous succulent herb was found growing in abundance along the sea coast near Dwarka. The main feature of the plant is its fusiform root, yellow terminal flowers and stipules reduced to a ring of brownish hairs.

Dwarka, **T. A. Rao, 345, 12-10-1961.**

- (5) *Grewia villosa* Willd. in *Ges. Naturf. Fr. Neue Schr.*, **4**, 205, 1803; Cooke, **1**, 143; Indraj, 102; Santapau, *Fl. Saur.*, **1**, 68.

The present collection of this plant was made in the island habitat of Beyt island on the way to Hanuman Dandi. Previously, Indraj reported the occurrence of the plant without locality and recently it is reported to occur by Santapau near Rozi of Jamnagar area. The shrubby plant in fruiting stage was found mixed up with *Euphorbia nivulia*.

Beyt island, **T. A. Rao, 1263, 16-11-1962.**

- (6) *Alhagi pseudalhagi* (M. Bieb.) Desv. in *Journ. Bot.*, **1**, 120, 1813; Santapau, *Fl. Saur.*, **1**, 141.

This spinescent shrub was found growing in abundance on sand-dunes and slacks from Delvada to Mandivi shore. The occurrence of this plant is of interest in view of Santapau's statement that his party had not seen this plant in the field; in Indraj's herbarium in Poona there is a specimen but no locality is given.

Delvada to Mandivi sandy banks and slacks; **T. A. Rao, 1934, 22-11-1962, B. Safui, 252, 24-2-1963.**

- (7) *Delonix elata* (L.) Gamble, *Fl. Pres. Madras*, 396, 1919; Santapau, *Fl. Saur.*, **1**, 185.

The plant is reported to occur at several places of Saurashtra. The present collection of this plant is from Beyt island. This is a showy tree and at the above place this is not found in abundance. The plant is not indigenous to Saurashtra area. The original country seems to be Abyssinia or Arabia.

Beyt island, T. A. Rao, 1274, 16-11-1962.

- (8) *Psilostachys sericea* (Koen. ex Roxb.) Hook. f. in *Fl. Brit. Ind.*, **4**, 726, 1885; Santapau, *Pl. Saur.*, **33**.

This interesting rare plant of Amaranthaceae has been collected near Somnath coast under the shade of *Acacia* and *Casuarina* spp. The occurrence of this plant is mentioned for Perim island in the year 1893. Gamble mentions it from Krishnapatnam, Nellore, Kakinada and Godavari Districts of Andhra Pradesh, near the sea coast. The present collection is therefore a new distributional record for the species.

Somnath, T. A. Rao, 566, 25-10-1961.

- (9) *Maerua arenaria* Hook. f. and Thoms. var. *scabra* Hook. f. and Thoms. in Hook. f. *Fl. Brit. Ind.*, **1**, 171, 1872.

Of the two varieties of this species of the family Capparidaceae the occurrence of scabrid variety does not seem to be a rare feature. During recent collections the scabrid variety was found at Beyt island, Una, Porbunder, Veraval, Delvada and Diu island. The glaucous variety was encountered only at Sani Mar Beyt island, even though it is reported to be common at several places of Saurashtra.

Beyt island, T. A. Rao, 1270, 16-11-1962; Una, T. A. Rao, 1931, 21-11-1962.

- (10) *Vogelia indica* Gibs. ex Wight in *Calc. Journ. Nat. Hist.*, **7**, 17, 1847 and *l.c.* t. 1075; *FBI*, **3**, 481; Santapau, *Pl. Saur.*, **22**.

A branching shrub with perfoliate, obtuse or orbicular leaves. The plant is reported to be found in abundance both at Rajkot and Porbunder. Recently the plant has been found growing in abundance near Veraval sea-coast.

Veraval, B. Safui, 2482, 19-2-1963.

- (11) *Solanum dubium* Fresen in *Mus. Senckenb.*, **1**, 166, 1833; Andrews, *Fl. Pl. Anglo-Aegypt. Sudan*, **3**, 95; Raizada and Vaid, in *Indian For.*, **83**, 645.

An erect herb, spreading all along the sandy coast of Beyt island. Raizada and Vaid (1957) reported the occurrence of this plant in Okhamandal without precise locality. This is a new record for Saurashtra and probably for the western part of India. The original country seems to be Sudan and perhaps coastal districts of Africa.

Beyt Island, T. A. Rao, **1279**, 16-11-1962.

- (12) *Solanum arundo* Mattei in *Boll. Ort. Bot. Palermo*, **7**, 188, 1908.

This plant is a new record for Saurashtra. This shrubby plant with white, blue on violet flowers was found growing along hedges in habitats, slightly away from the seashore. The original country seems to be Tropical East Africa.

Porbunder, T. A. Rao, **561**, 21-10-1961; Diu island, T. A. Rao, **1949**; Veraval to Somnath, B. Safui, **2485**.

- (13) *Pavonia patens* (Andr.) Chiov. in *Ann. di Bot.*, **13**, 409, 1915; Santapau, *Fl. Saur.*, **1**, 51.

An erect shrubby plant with yellow flowers. In Saurashtra its occurrence has been reported at Jamnagar, Gumli, Bileshwar, Okhamandal. The present collection was made at Diu island and Dwarka sandy coast.

Diu island, B. Safui, **2522**, 22-2-1963; Dwarka, B. Safui, **2434**, 11-2-1963.

SUMMARY

This paper records with brief notes new records and localities for the occurrence of the following flowering plants from Saurashtra coast and neighbouring islands: *Merremia quinquefolia* (L.) Hall. f., *Euphorbia heterophylla* L., *Kedrostis rostrata* (Rottl.) Cogn., *Portulaca tuberosa* Roxb., *Grewia villosa* Willd., *Alhagi pseudalhagi* (M. Bieb.) Desv., *Delonix elata* (L.) Gamble, *Psilostachys sericea* (Koen. ex Roxb.) Hook. f., *Maerua arenaria* Hook. f. and Thoms. var. *scabra* Hook. f. and Thoms., *Vogelia indica* Gibs. ex Wight, *Solanum dubium* Fresen, *Solanum arundo* Mattei and *Pavonia patens* (Andr.) Chiov.

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