

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Further additions to the flora of Melghat Tiger Reserve (MTR) Maharashtra, India

Bhogaonkar PY¹ and Dhole PA^{2*}

¹Taxonomy Research Lab., P.G. Dept. of Botany; Govt. Vidarbha Institute of Science and Humanities,
Amravati 444 604 (M.S.), India.

^{2*}Central Botanical Laboratory, Botanical Survey of India, Howrah 711103, India.

*Corresponding author mail: taxonpankaj@gmail.com

Manuscript details:

Received: 24 February, 2014
Revised: 06 May, 2014
Revised Received: 09 May, 2014
Accepted: 17 May, 2014
Published: 30 June 2014

ISSN: 2320-964X (Online)
ISSN: 2320-7817 (Print)

Editor: Dr. Arvind Chavhan

Citation: Bhogaonkar PY and Dhole PA (2014) Further additions to the flora of Melghat Tiger Reserve (MTR) Maharashtra, India. *Int. J. of Life Sciences*, 2(2):185-186.

Copyright: © Bhogaonkar PY and Dhole PA, This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial - No Derivs License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

**ABSTRACT**

Melghat is one of the 9 tiger Reserve Forests, enjoying this status since 1972. Though the forest is of dry deciduous type, there are several valleys and cliffs which remain wet for most of the year. Here two new families viz., Hydrophyllaceae (R. Br.) and Lobeliaceae (R. Br.) have been reported for the first time for the Flora of Melghat.

Key Words: Additions, Hydrophyllaceae, Lobeliaceae.

The main objective of the Tiger Project is not only to protect the Tiger but also to preserve its unique ecosystem; in this case being that of 'Dry Deciduous Forest' of central India. Undoubtedly, a number of plant taxonomists have provided information in the past. In 1863-64 Col Peterson, then the Conservator of Forests of Central Provinces prepared a report that contains the earliest existent description of Melghat Forests. In 1887, Van Someron published 'A List of Trees in Melghat Forests' wherein he reported 110 tree species. In 1916 Witt listed the occurrence of 353 naturalized species in Melghat and bordering plain (Anonymous, 1926). Patel 1968 prepared Forest Flora of Melghat, this flora did not adequately cover most of the herbs and grasses. "Flora of Melghat Tiger Reserve" published by Dhore and Joshi (1988) reported 650 naturalized species. In 1998 Bhogaonkar and Devarkar added 72 species to the existing list. However, at the same time some of species enlisted by earlier authors (though as rare) are not found today.

As continuation of such exploration the authors came across two new families namely Hydrophyllaceae (R. Br.) and Lobeliaceae (R. Br.). Plants were collected, identified with the help of standard floras (Hooker 1997, Cooke 1967, Naik 1998, Yadav and Sardesai, 2002) and herbarium specimens made are deposited in the herbarium of Botanical Survey of India, Pune.



Fig. 1: *Hydrolea zeylanica* (L.) Vahl.



Fig.2: *Lobelia alsinoides* Lam.

1. HYDROPHYLLACE

Hydrolea zeylanica (L.) Vahl.

Herbs, aquatic or semi.aquatic, procumbent ascending, rooting at lower nodes. Leaves 2.5 x 0.3.1.5 cm, lanceolate, membranous, apex acute, base tapering. Flowers bright blue, 1.0.1.2 cm across, in short racemes; calyx glandular hairy; corolla deeply divided. Capsules 0.4.0.6 cm long, ovoid, enclosed in persistent calyx, Seeds oblong, numerous (Fig. 1).

Flowering & Fruiting: November-February.

Locality: Sukalihenda

Additional specimen examined: INDIA, Maharashtra, Amravati, (Suklihenda PAD1428, 27-11-2011).

2. LOBELIACEAE

Lobelia alsinoides Lam.

Herbs, 5.15 cm tall. Leaves 1.5.2.0 x 0.7.1.5 cm, ovate or oblong, apex acute or obtuse, base cordate, margins crenate. Flowers blue, forming lax, terminal, leafy racemes. Capsules c 0.4 cm long. (Fig. 2.)

Flowering & Fruiting: August –Feb.

Locality: Churakund Circle

Additional specimen examined: INDIA, Maharashtra, Amravati, (Churakund PAD1478, 27-10-2010).

Considering the climate and topography of Melghat, many more species are expected to be added to the existing list. Floristic studies of Melghat are far from complete. Exhaustive re-exploration of core areas of Melghat Tiger Reserve is hoped to bring some more interesting species in light.

REFERENCES

- Annonymous, (1926) *Guide to Chikhaldra with a selection of Papers Relating to the Gawilgarh Fort*. Govt Press, Nagpur.
- Bhogaonkar PY and Devarkar VD (1998) *Additions to the Flora of Melghat (some rare and uncommon plants)*. Technical Bulletin No. VII. The Directorate Project Tiger, Melghat.
- Cooke T (1967) (Rpr). *The Flora of the Presidency of Bombay*. Vol. II. Botanical Survey of India. Calcutta.
- Dhore MA and PA Joshi (1988) *Flora of Melghat Tiger Reserve, Directorate, Project Tiger, Melghat*.
- Hooker JD (1997) (Rpr). *The Flora of British India*. Vol. IV, Periodical Expert Book Agency, New Delhi.
- Naik VN (1988) *Flora of Marathwada*. Amrut Prakashan, Aurangabad.
- Patel RI (1968) *Forest Flora of Melghat*. Prabhat Press, Meerut.
- Yadav SR and Sardesai MM (2002) *Flora of Kolhapur District*. Shivaji University, Kolhapur (India)