

*Asplenium nitidum* Sw. as labelled on the sheets. *A. nitidum* is characterised by bipinnate fronds and pinnules apex acute.

*A. neolaserpitifolium* is an epiphytic fern, hitherto, reported from S. China (Hainan & Laos) and Vietnam (Tonkin). The westwards extension of its distributional range in the North-eastern Himalayas is of phytogeographical interest.

A brief description along with a photograph and illustration is given below to facilitate future collectors locate this interesting rare fern from other regions.

***Asplenium neolaserpitifolium*** Tardieu-Blot et Ching, Notul. Syst. 5: 153. Pl. 6. f. 1, 2. 1936.

Laminae c. 70 cm long, 30-45 cm broad, tripinnate, deltoid-lanceolate, acuminate, pale green when dried; *stipes* not seen; rachis greyish or grey-green, grooved dorsally, groove continues to stipicellus; *pinnae* up to 25 cm long, 15 cm broad at base, c. 16 pairs, stalked, suboppositely alternate, deltoid-lanceolate, subfalcate, long acuminate; *stipicellus* 5-20 mm long, grooved; costae grooved, with a few linear or narrowly lanceolate, entire palae scattered towards the base; pinnules up to 8 cm long, c. 3 cm

broad at the base, subopposite at base and becoming alternate upwards, stalked, stalks up to 7 mm long, basal pair more or less equal and well developed, costule narrowly winged, pinnate, deltoid, basisropic, base cuneate, long acuminate; ultimate segments stalked, rhomboid, cuneate at the base, truncate or round at apex, irregularly toothed, distal segments gradually less incised coriaceous; veins up to 5-times forked, faint; *Sori* asplenoid, c. 7 mm long, centre of the pinnae; indusium thick, light brown; *spores*  $32-35 \times 22-25 \mu$  m, light brown, perispore present.

*Specimens studied:* INDIA: Arunachal Pradesh: Base Duphla Hills, 1874, J. L. Lister 79 (Acc. No. 10865) and Duphla Hills, 330 m, 1874, J. L. Lister s.n. (Acc. No. 10867). Sikkim; 330 m, Dec. 4, 1872, Annon. s. n. (Acc. No. 10877 all from CAL).

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### THE FRAGRANT *CEROPEGIA* OF NINETEENTH CENTURY

The name *Ceropegia odorata* Nimmo was first listed by Graham (1839) with the meagre description 'Flowers yellow, fragrant, so unusual in the genus', hence considered as *nomen nudum*. J. D. Hooker (1883) validated this name by providing a full description and citing the collections of Nimmo and Law from Salsette (Bombay), Concan. Since Nimmo's specimens are not available in any of the well-known herbaria, McCann (1945) expressed doubts about the

identity of Law's specimens (Lectotype, K) and their similarities, particularly the 'fragrants' in flowers, with the missing Nimmo's specimens. This led him to rename Law's specimens as *C. blatteri* McCann. Consequently, interesting discussions followed on the identity and nomenclature of this species (Santapau, 1948; Seshagiri Rao, 1947). None reported the occurrence of this species after J. D. Hooker (*l.c.*). Though Huber (1957) preferred to retain Nimmo's

binomial, yet expressed doubts about Nimmo's plant. Recently Sabnis et Bedi (1971) rediscovered *C. odorata* from Pavagadh hill (Gujarat) but did not report the much debated 'fragrans' in their flowers.

A natural photograph (Pl. 1) of the inflorescence of this twiner is provided with for the first time to help further in identification.

Scrutiny of *Ceropegia* specimens housed at CAL revealed that two sheets, one of Col. Poulett (CAL. Acc. No. 296563) from Mt. Abu (Rajasthan) dated Aug. 1891 and the other of Gibson (CAL. Acc. No. 296695) from 'Bombay Presidency', belong to *C. odorata* Hook. f. though misidentified earlier. This provides with second new locality (Mt. Abu) in its range of distribution. These two sheets were seen by McCann on 28-2-1944 who merely put a remark 'will decide later'. Evidently he had these sheets in mind when he effected the change in name to *C. blatteri*, but made no mention of these. A recent vegetative collection of a *Ceropegia* species from Tarubanda forest, Melghat (Amravati district, Maharashtra), when flowered at Pune, had yellow flowers with pronounced fragrans. This fragrans is certainly an unusual distinguishing feature for Western Indian *Ceropegias*. Besides, the whole plant agrees with the description of J. D. Hooker (*l. c.*). Thus after a century and a half, 'fragrans' as reported by Nimmo, could be confirmed through this collection (Ansari 149304 in BSI) which proves the existence of Nimmo's species, confirms all previous collections, reported above, as similar to Nimmo's (missing) specimens and provides a third new locality. It would be worth observing 'fragrans' in flowers of *Ceropegia* species from other parts of the country also. Those interested in this fascinating species should search in Aravallis (Mt. Abu)—its probable home or hills of Gujarat and Western range of Satpura, particularly in late August or early September when one is likely to get this rather very rare species in bloom. It can serve as a good potted plant in the

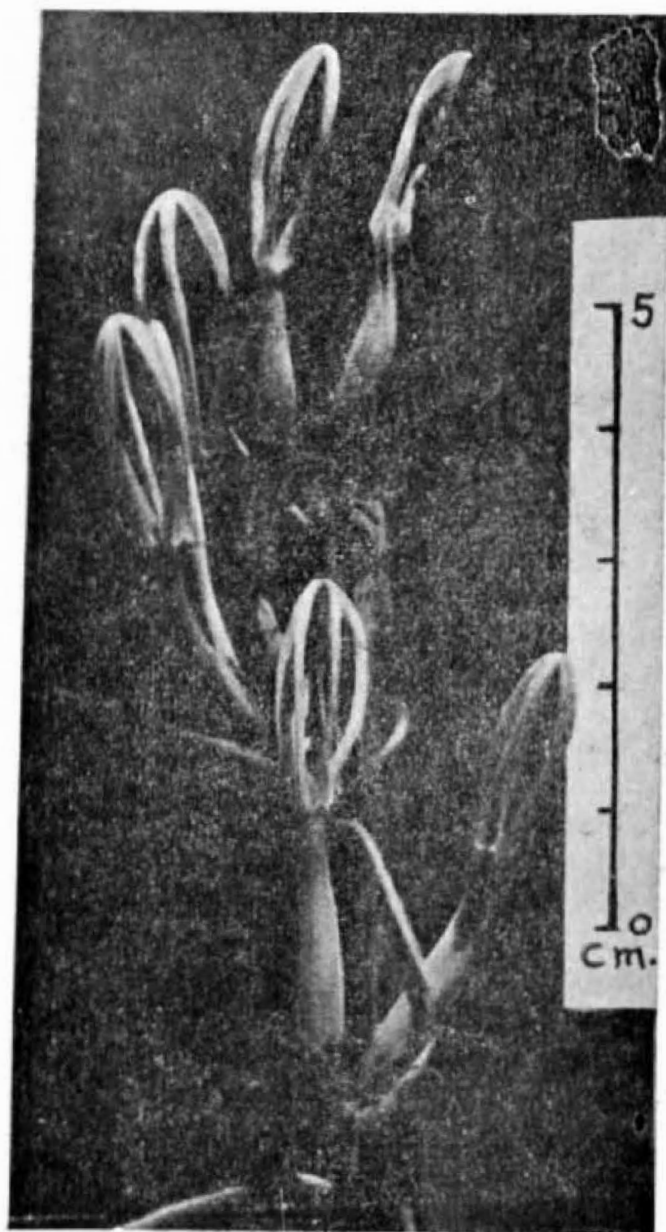


Plate 1 Inflorescence of *Ceropegia odorata* Nimmo ex Hook. f.

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#### NOTES ON TWO INDIAN GRASSES

Blatter, during his studies on the plants of erstwhile Bombay Presidency, described a grass, *Dichanthium maccannii* (1927) from Panchgani Plateau in the western ghats. Although it has been illustrated in Blatter and McCann's *Bombay Grasses* (1935), nothing more is known of this since then. Bor (1960) stated, "Distribution: Endemic on the Panchgani Plateau" and further added, "The type of this species is not in the Blatter Herbarium, St. Xavier's College, Bombay and there is no material of this species at Kew".

It is therefore, interesting to note its occurrence in the Marathwada region on the Deccan Plateau. The relevant information in respect of its distribution, ecology together with diagnostic description is provided here for ready reference.

*Dichanthium maccannii* Blatter in *Journ. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 32 : 357. 1927 ; Blatter et McCann, *Bomb. Gr.* 92. t. 60. 1935 ; Bor, *Gr. Burma, Ceylon, Ind. et Pak.* 135. 1960 (Figs. 1, a and b).

Tufted, perennial grass, 40-90 cm tall. Racemes 2-4, 2-6 cm long. Spikelets paired ; lower glumes of both the spikelets covered with trichomes on the back.

Frequent on rocky soil of open grasslands and on bunds of fields,

*Fls. & frts.*: October to February.

AURANGABAD: Daulatabad, Naik, 179. PARBHANI: Agric. Univ. Campus, Shelke s.n. NANDED: Mahur, Zate 1426 ; Ambadi, Zate 1675 ; Fugadigutta, Zate 1688.

*Ischaemum borii* Almeida has been recently described by Almeida (1970) from Amboli, another hill station on the western ghats in southern Maharashtra. Additional material of this species was collected subsequently during the botanical excursion of this department in 1974. The specimens were referred to Dr. J. F. Veldkamp of Rijks-herbarium, Leiden, who informed me that my specimens exactly matched with the above species. The description as well as illustration provided by Almeida, however, is inaccurate in some respects. Redescription of the taxon is therefore provided here together with the illustration and relevant notes.

*Ischaemum borii* Almeida in *Journ. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 66(3): 513. 1969-70, *emend* Naik (Figs. 1, c and d).

Decumbent, annual grass, 30-40 cm tall. Leaves lanceolate, 6-10 × 0.8-1.2 cm, rather plicate, narrowed at base into a petiole up to 3 cm long. Racemes two, 2-2.5 cm long. Spikelets paired or in threes with one sessile and one or two pedicelled. Lower glume of the sessile spikelet lanceolate, 4.5 ×