

STUDIES IN INDIAN EUPHORBIACEAE III: MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

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ABSTRACT

Tritaxis beddomei Benth. is transferred to *Trigonostemon*. *Tritaxis beddomei* sensu D. Sunderraj is synonymous to *Jatropha maheshwarii* Subr. & Nayar. *Mallotus muricatus* (Wt.) Bedd. is given the new combination, *Mallotus intermedius* (Baill.) Balak.

INTRODUCTION

Baillon, who described the genus *Tritaxis* in Etud. Gen. Euph. 342, 1858, based on *T. gaudichaudii* from Cochinchina, later reduced it to *Trigonostemon* Bl. in his 'Histoire des Plantes' (1874), following Mueller-Argoviensis (Linnaea 34: 213, 1865). However Bentham (1879) regarded this genus distinct and added two more species, *Tritaxis cumingii* from Philippines based on *Trigonostemon cumingii* Muell.-Arg. and *Tritaxis beddomei* based on a specimen of Beddome from Tinnevely, in peninsular India. He described his last species as "*foliis integerrimis v. vix sinuato dentatis, cymis laxi pedunculatis glabris, staminum verticillo unico pentandro infra terminalem diandrum*". J. D. Hooker (1887) had reservations about the genus of this species as the specimen had no female flowers. Pax (Engler, Pflanzenr. 42: 113, 1910) has also expressed doubt about the distinctness of this genus.

An examination of the type specimen at Kew Herbarium revealed that this species fits into the genus *Trigonostemon* Bl., characterised by imbricate sepals, free petals, 7 verticillate monadelphous stamens, anther cells united at base and free at apex.

***Trigonostemon beddomei* (Benth.) Balak. comb. nov.**

Tritaxis beddomei Benth. in J. Linn. Soc. 17: 221, 1879, Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. 5: 384, 1887; Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 1341, 1925.

Holotypus: Tinnevely, *Beddome* 37 (K).

Without the benefit of any authentic material available for study in Indian Herbaria, Daniel Sunderraj based only on literature, identified some of his specimens from Tinnevely to *Tritaxis beddomei* and as the original and subsequent descriptions are deficient in characters of female flowers, he published (1956) an emended latin description with these characters from his specimens only. A study of his specimens and comparison with the type of *Tritaxis beddomei* revealed that his speci-

mens and description belong to a *Jatropha* and referable to *J. maheshwarii* Subr. & Nayar.

***Jatropha maheshwarii* Subr. & Nayar in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 6: 331-332, ff. 1-8, 1964.**

Tritaxis beddomei D. Sunderraj in J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 53: 525, ff. 1-9, 1956, non Benth. et auctt. syn. nov.

As usual in this genus, the leaves of this species also show much variation in size and shape. Though the type specimen (Nayar 107A) has peltate and ovate leaves, the leaves in the specimens of D. Sunderraj show transitional stages from subpeltate to epeltate and ovate to lanceolate nature.

Specimens examined: Hb. Wight 7803 (CAL); Panagadi, 11 Nov. 1931, no collector's name (MH); Near Vijayapathy, Tinnevely Dist. 100 m, 5 Feb. 1945, D. Sunderraj & S. R. Raju s.n. (CAL, MH); Vijayapathy, sea level, 21 Sept. 1945, D. Sunderraj s.n. (CAL); Tinnevely, May 1949, D. Sunderraj & J. Saktharam Rao Acc. No. 96729 (MH).

Distribution: Endemic to Cape Comorin and Tinnevely, mainly in coastal area.

A NEW COMBINATION IN *MALLOTUS*

***Mallotus intermedius* (Baill.) Balak. comb. nov.**

Axenfeldia intermedia Baill. Etud. Gen. Euph. 419, 1858.

Mallotus muricatus (Wt.) Beddome, Foresters' Man. 208, 1873 p.p.; Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India 5: 436, 1888; Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 1322, 1925 (non Muell.-Arg. 1865).

Claoxylon muricatum Wight, Ic. Pl. Ind. Or. 5: t. 1886, 1852, *dextra fig. tant.*

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