

**PEUCEDANUM THOMSONII CL. — A RARE INDIAN
UMBELLIFER REDISCOVERED**

Clarke (1879) described *Peucedanum thomsonii* in Flora of British India from the specimens collected by Thomson in 1848 from Kishtwar and Banihal in Kashmir Himalayas. Eversince, it has not been collected again. The only record of the species is its type specimen in the Central National Herbarium, Calcutta (Mukerjee, 1982). While surveying Kashmir Himalayas for Umbellifers the authors collected this species from the type locality in June, 1978 which is almost a century and a quarter since its first report.

At present the species is represented by a small population at Khalen about 5 km east of Kishtwar plateau. Banihal the second place from where Thomson had collected it (Clarke, 1879), did not yield any specimen during present survey indicating that the area of distribution of the species which was already too narrow, when it was first described, has shrunk all the more.

***Peucedanum thomsonii* Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. 2 : 711 (1879).**

Plants perennial, up to 1.25 m tall, glabrous, stem naked upwards ; leaves 2-3 pinnate, ultimate segments linear-oblong ; umbels irregularly branched, involucre bracts 0-2, linear ; rays unequal ; involucre of 1-3 linear bractlets ; flowers bisexual, yellow ; petals five, incurved ; stamens five, anthers dorsifixed ; carpels two, syncarpous,

ovary bilocular, each locule bearing a single pendulous ovule ; styles erect surrounded by slightly bulbous stylopodium ; fruit dorsally compressed, glabrous, ridges distinct slightly excurrent ; furrows 1-vittate.

P. thomsonii falls in the category of "Rare" plants as per regulations formulated by the International union for conservation of Nature and Natural resources. Its extremely restricted distribution is not the only threat to its survival. The danger is accentuated by the fact that the plants are constantly browsed by goats and sheep which adversely effects seed production and restricts its dispersal.

The other factors that have restricted the species from widening its distribution are being looked into.

It is recommended that the species be included in the Red Data Book and proper measures be adopted to save it from extinction. Herbarium sheets of the specimens collected now have been entered into the University Herbarium under Nos. IAH 176 and 183.

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I. A. HAMAL AND A. K. KOUL

Department of Biosciences, University of Jammu, Jammu