

OCCURRENCE OF *VOACANGA GRANDIFOLIA* (MIQ.) ROLFE (APOCYNACEAE) IN INDIA AND THE ASIAN CONTINENT

Upon a mistaken identify for *Pagiantha dichotoma* (Roxb.) Markgr. (Apocynaceae) the author, responding to a request in connection with phytochemical studies, collected about five kilograms of leaves from well established shrubs to small trees growing in waste places near P.M.G. junction in Trivandrum. Since phytochemical analysis showed entirely different results casting doubt about correct identity of the plant, attempts were made with \*Kew Herbarium, London and this helped to determine the plant correctly to be *Voacanga grandifolia* (Miq.) Rolfe (Apocynaceae). This species with its earlier known distribution in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea has been reported from India as wild in Valpoy forests of Northern Goa (Sahni and Bahadur, 1979).

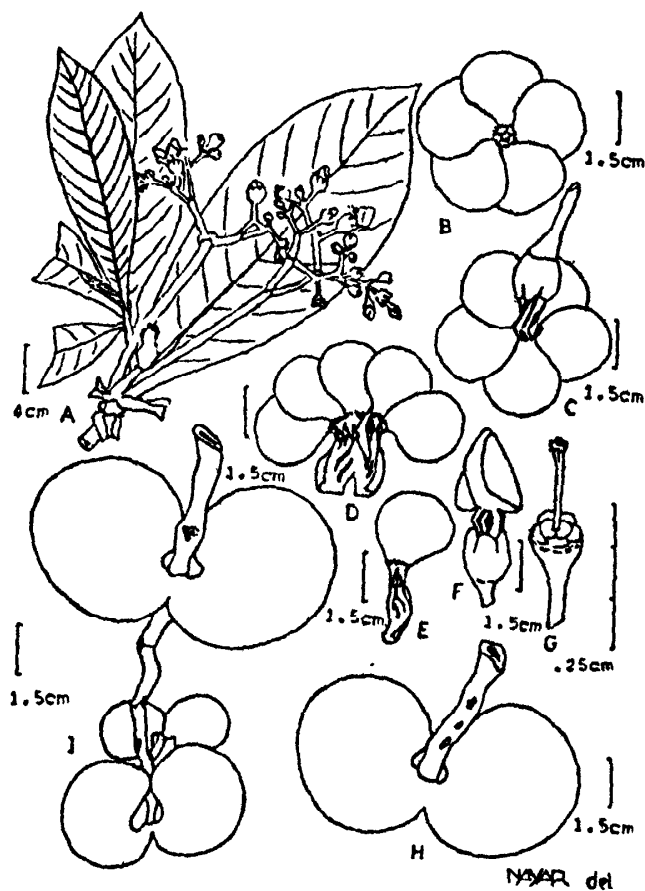
*Voacanga* Thou., Gen. Nov. Madagasc. 10. 1806.

***Voacanga grandifolia*** (Miq.) Rolfe, Journ. Bot. London 21 : 202. 1883; Sahni & Bahadur, Indian Journ. For. 2 : 33. 1979. Leeuwenberg, Agric. Univ. Wageningen Papers 85-3 : 55. 1985; *Pootia grandifolia* Miq., Versl. en Meded. Kon. Akad. Wetensch. 6 : 193. 1857; Fl. Ind. Bat. 2 : 417. 1857. *Orchipeda grandifolia* (Miq.) Miq., Ann. Mus. Lugd. Bat. 1 : 16, t. 10. 1864.

*O. gracilipes* Miq., Ann. Mus. Bot. Lugd. Bat. 1 : 316. 1864. *Voacanga gracilipes* (Miq.) Markgr. Notizbl. Bot. Gart. Berlin 12 : 548. 1935. *Tabernaemontana celebica* Miq., Ann. Mus. Lugd. Bat. 4 : 139. 1869. *Orchipeda papuana* F. v. Muell., Descr. Notes Papuan Pl. 7 : 30. 1886. *Voacanga papuana* (F. v. Muell.) K. Schum. in Engler & Prantl, Nat. Pflanzenf. 4. 2 : 149. 1895. *V. versteegii* Markgr., Nova Guinea 14 : 287. 1927.

*V. grandifolia* var. *glabrifolia* Bakh. f. in Backer & Bakh. f., Fl. Java 2 : 229. 1965.

Woody shrubs to small trees; leaves sessile, slightly auricled, elliptic to obovate, 20-40 cm long, 5-12.5 cm wide, acute at apex, glabrous to sparsely pubescent above and



*Voacanga grandifolia* (Miq.) Rolfe

Figs. A-I: A. Twig. B. & C. Flowers. D. Flower split opened. E. Petal with a portion of corolla tube. F. Flower bud. G. Gynoecium. H. & I. Fruits.

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beneath; inflorescence robust-pedunculate, peduncle 8-18 cm long, dichotomously branched from base, occasionally monochasial towards tip, pedicel 1-2 cm long; flowers pentamerous, 4-6.5 cm in diameter;

bracts ovate to rounded or acute, deciduous, 0.75-1.5 cm long; calyx fleshy, glabrous outside with band of scattered collectors slightly above the base inside, deciduous, 0.75-1.5 cm long, 0.8-1.5 cm in diameter; sepal suborbicular to semicircular, 4-7.5 mm in diameter; corolla creamy, tube 1-2 cm long, prominently twisted, angularly swollen below the tip of the tube with a faucal annulus inside; petal slightly twisted, suborbicular to orbicular, when separated from tube obovate, 1.75-2.5 cm in diameter; stamens included, inserted just below the throat of corolla, style equalling the length of corolla tube, stellately thickened at apex, disk annular, 5-lobed; fruit of two partly united carpels, mature carpel slightly longer than wide and almost as thick as wide, 4-6 cm in diameter, dark green with grey warts; seeds arillate, dark brown, papillose all over.

KERALA. Trivandrum : T. S. Nayar 2371 (TBGT, K).

*Note* : Of about 120 representative specimens mentioned world wide in the revisionary work of the genus *Voacanga*, Dr. Leeuwenberg (*l.c.*) has included two specimens collected by one Erlanson and deposited in MICH and NY with collection no 5129 from the same locality in Kerala. Dr. Leeuwenberg (*l.c.*) doubted whether this was a garden

escape. Authorities of state owned Botanic Garden connected with the Zoo at Trivandrum has no record of its introduction in their garden. The species has naturalised establishing well at many places in Trivandrum and is gregariously encroaching waste places and compounds. Stumps of some of them have attained the girth diameter of even 20 cm or more. As this species has gone locally under the name *Pagiantha dichotoma* (Roxb.) Markgr. the identity of this plant so far was not doubted.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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#### ON THE FOLKLORE OF *ADANSONIA DIGITATA* L. FROM RAJASTHAN

*Adansonia digitata* L. commonly known as *Gorakhimli* or *Karsaan aamli* is a native of tropical Africa and introduced in India by Arab traders. It was first recorded in Rajasthan from Ajmer—Mangaliawas (Shetty & Singh 1987). Later on it was also reported from Pratapgarh of district Chittorgarh (South Rajasthan). It is being planted in

Banswara town in gardens and on avenues as a popular avenue tree (Singh, 1983). During recent plant explorations of Jhalawar district (S. E. Rajasthan) the author located it from 2 places. The specimens collected were identified and deposited in Herbarium, Botany Department, University of Rajasthan (RUBL).