DALBERGIA CONGESTA GRAHAM EX WIGHT & ARN. (PAPILIONACEAE)— A NEW RECORD FROM NORTH ARCOT DISTRICT TO THE EASTERN GHATS

During the course of plant exploration in the North Arcot district, Tamil Nadu, specimens of a species collected were identified as *Dalbergia congesta* Graham ex Wight & Arn. after consulting relevant literature and matching with authentic specimens deposited in MH. The identity of the specimens was later confirmed by Dr. K. Thothathri, a legume specialist. This species is so far recorded only from the Eastern Nilgiris district of the Western Ghats at 1,700 m - 2,300 m MSL as an endemic species (Ahmedullah and Nayar 1987, Thothathri 1987). Thus this collection from Singarapettai hills at 800 m - 1,100 m MSL of the Southern Eastern Ghats reveals its extended distribution.

As a detailed description is provided by Thothathri (1987), only a short description is given highlighting the diagnostic characters. Field notes and other related data are furnished. As no illustration exists in literature, a diagram (Fig. 1) is provided for easy identification.

Dalbergia congesta Grah. ex Wt. & Arn., Prodr. 265. 1834 ; Walp., Repert. 1 : 799. 1842 ; Benth. in Miq., Pl. Jungh. 1 : 255. 1852 et J. Linn. Soc. London 4 (Suppl.) : 43. 1860 ; Baker in Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 2 : 232. 1867 (excl. *D. gardneriana* Benth.); Prain in J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal 67 : 444. 1897 et in Ann. Roy. Bot. Garden, Calcutta 10(1) : 66. 1904 ; Rama Rao, Flow. Pl. Travancore 129. 1914 ; Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 382. 1918 (Repr. ed. 2 : 269. 1957) ; Vajravelu in Nair & Henry, Fl. Tamil Nadu 1 : 102. 1983 ; Thoth. in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 25 : 173. 1983 (1985) and Tax. Revis. Dalbergieae 88. 1987. *Amerimnon congestum* (Graham) O. Kuntze, Rev. Gen. Pl. 159. 1891.

Type : Neelgherris-Noton, *Wall. Cat. No.* 5827 (Microfiche MH !).

Climbing shrubs. Leaves imparipinnate, alternate ; leaflets 2-5 pairs, alternate. Inflorescence axillary, congested panicles. Flowers white. Calyx campanulate, 5-toothed, teeth subequal. Petals 5, distinctly clawed. Stamens 9, monadelphous. Ovary oblong, stipitate. Pods oblong, 2.0-7.5 × 1.0-1.5 cm, reddish brown, thin and flat, stalked, reticulately veined ; seeds 1 or 2, brownish black, reniform.

Fl. : May-June. *Fr.* : June onwards.

Specimens examined : TAMIL NADU : North Arcot Dist., Singarapettai hills, 6.4.1987, *M. B. Viswanathan* 1418 (Bharathiar Univ. Herb., Coimbatore, MH and CAL). Nilgiris Dist., Coonoor Ghats, 28.5.1883, without collector, *s.n.*, Acc. No. 17092 (MH) ; Coonoor Ghats, 1864, *R. H. Beddome s.n.*, Acc. No. 17011 (MH).

Distribution : Tamil Nadu.

Ecology : *Dalbergia congesta* occurs in deciduous forests of southern moist, mixed, deciduous forest and southern dry mixed, deciduous forest. Trees like *Cochlospermum religiosum, Ehretia laevis, Ficus microcarpa, F. racemosa, Gyrocarpus asiaticus, Rhamnus virgatus* and *Strychnos potatorum,* shrubby species of *Benkara malabarica, Rhus sinuata* and *Schleichera oleosa,* climbing shrubs like *Cryptolepis buchananii, Dioscorea oppositifolia, D. tomentosa, Meyenia hawtayneana* and *Rhynchosia hirta* and a fern species, *Christella dentata* are the commonly associated species.

Legris (1963) and Legris and Meher-Homji (1984) opine that plants have migrated from Nilgiris to the Eastern Ghats passing through the Biligirirangan, Sheveroy and Kalrayan hills. This might explain the presence of

this species on the Eastern Ghats. However, there is no earlier report of its occurrence in this connecting hills. It appears that this species is a palaeoendemic, shared by the Nilgiris and North Arcot with disjunct distribution.

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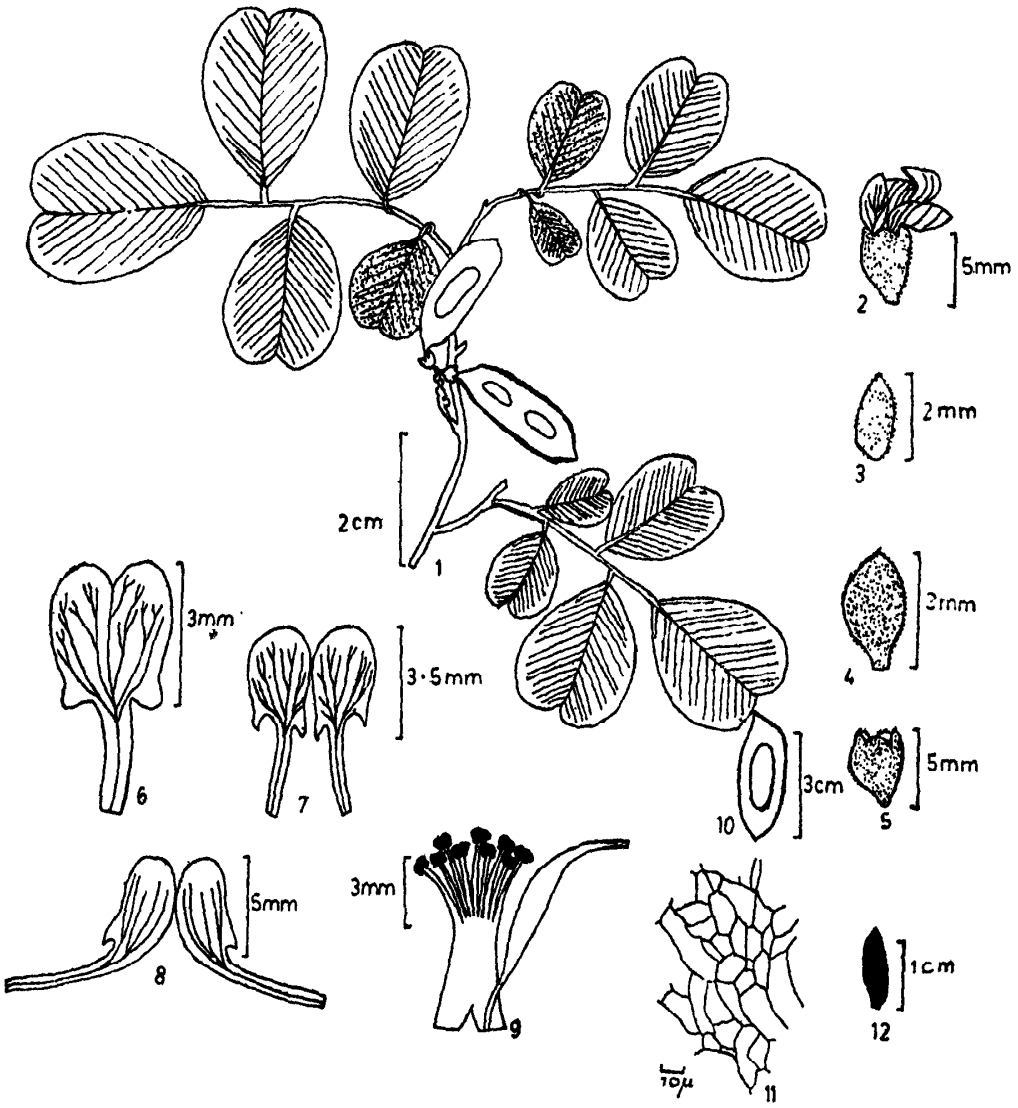

Dalbergia congesta Graham ex Wight & Arn.

Figs. 1-12: 1. A branchlet. 2. Flower. 3. Bract. 4. Bracteole. 5. Calyx. 6. Standard. 7. Wings. 8. Keels. 9. Stamens with ovary. 10. Pod. 11. Pod surface—A portion enlarged. 12. Seed.

constructive suggestions and for a fellowship awarded under the North Arcot District Flora scheme respectively.

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PREMNA NANA COLLETT & HEMSLEY—AN ADDITION TO THE VERBENACEAE OF INDIA

Premna nana was described as a new species by Collett and Hemsley (1890) from the Shan Hills, Burma. Later it was recorded by Brandis (1906) from Pegu, Burma. While critically studying the holdings in various Indian Herbaria for a revision of the Indian Verbenaceae three specimens of *P. nana* in the herbarium of the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow (LWG) collected from Manipur were found to have been wrongly determined as *P. macrophylla* Wallich. That these specimens are *P. nana* was confirmed after studying the protologue and a cibachrome photograph of the type from Kew. *P. macrophylla* being an undershrub may be confused with *P. nana* which is a herb. However, these two species can be differentiated as follows.

Undershrubs, more than 30 cm high ; leaves obovate-lanceolate, 11-23 × 3-9 cm, subentire or serrate at margins ... ... *P. macrophylla*

Herbs, less than 25 cm high ; leaves oblong, ovate-lanceolate to oblanceolate, 4.5-12×1.5-4.5 cm, crenate-serrate at margins ... ... *P. nana*

As *P. nana* has not been recorded from the present Indian territory so far, it is reported here with a full description and an illustration.

Premna nana Collett & Hemsley in J. Linn. Soc. London, Bot. 28 : 109. 1890 ; Brandis, Indian Trees 510. 1906. (Fig. 1).

Herbs, erect, unbranched, up to 25 cm high ; rootstock thick, woody with lateral buds ; stem terete, densely villous ; internodes 0.5-2 cm long. Leaves oblong, lanceolate or ovate-lanceolate to oblanceolate, obtuse, subacute, decurrent into petioles, crenate-serrate at margins, acute to obtuse at apex, 4.5-12 × 1.5-4.5 cm, thick, dark green, densely villous, copiously so on the nerves ; lateral nerves 4-6 per side. Inflorescence a terminal corymb, compact, *ca* 2 × 3.5 cm, composed of 4-6 decussate-opposite simple cymes ; peduncles flattened, densely villous, *ca* 1 cm long, *ca* 2 mm wide. Flowers white or cream-coloured ; pedicels *ca* 2 mm long. Calyx campanulate, 5-toothed, 2-lipped, *ca* 3 × 2 mm ; upper lip 2-toothed, obtuse at apex ; the lower 3-toothed, subequal, acute, pubescent. Corolla infundibular, 2-lipped, 4-lobed, hairy at throat ; upper lip entire, suborbicular, concave, *ca* 2 × 2 mm ; the lower 3-