

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *VENTILAGO GOUGHII* GAMBLE (RHAMNACEAE) — A RARE/THREATENED SPECIES IN THE EASTERN GHATS

While preparing a floristic account on North Arcot District, based on plant specimens collected between 1984 and 1988, a species of *Ventilago* collected from Yelagiri hills has been confirmed as *V. goughii*, after collating relevant literature and herbarium specimens available in MH. Henry *et al.* (1978), Chithra (1983), Vajravelu and Chandrasekaran (1984) and Ahmedullah and Nayar (1987) opine that this is a rare/threatened species. Banerjee and Mukerjee (1970) inadvertently cited 'Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh' for this species without any mention of voucher specimens. The present discovery from North Arcot District of the Eastern Ghats is of phytogeographical significance. Hence a short description, illustrations and other related data are given here for easy identification and for facilitating *in situ* conservation.

Ventilago goughii Gamble in Kew Bull. 1916 : 134. 1916 et Fl. Pres. Madras 218. 1918 (1 : 156. 1957 repr. ed.); Banerjee & Mukerjee in Indian For. 96 : 211. 1970; Oza in Indian For. 96 : 406. 1970; Henry *et al.* in J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 75 : 687. 1978; Chithra in Nair & Henry, Fl. Tamil Nadu 1 : 77. 1983; Vajravelu & Chandrasekaran in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 26 : 213. 1984 (1986); Ahmedullah & Nayar, Endemic Plants Indian Region 1 : 181. 1987.

Climbing shrubs, puberulous. Leaves oblong-lanceolate, $3.7 \times 1.2-2.7$ cm, attenuate at base, entire and undulate at margin, acute to acuminate at apex. Flowers cream-coloured, in terminal and axillary panicles. Calyx-lobes 5, deltoid. Petals 5, obcordate, cucullate. Stamens 5, enclosed by petals. Style arms 2. Fruits samaroid, oblong, $3.8-4.2 \times 0.7-0.8$ cm; wings mucronate at apex, grey-puberulous. Seeds 1, subglobose, black.

Fl. & Fr. : November-March.

Local name : Surulkodi (Tamil).

Distribution : India.

Specimens examined : TAMIL NADU. North Arcot Dist. : Swamimalai, ± 1330 m, 28.3.1987, M. B. Viswanathan 1381 (Bharathiar Univ., Herb., MH and CAL). Nilgiri Dist. : Coonoor Ghats, M. A. Lawson s.n., Acc. No. 10348 (MH); Segur Ghats, 3. 1886, M. A. Lawson s.n. Acc. No. 10369 (MH); Kunjappanai Forest, ± 980 m, 1.2.1972, E. Vajravelu 39707 (MH). Tirunelveli Dist. : Thulukkanparai, Thirukurungudi, ± 350 m, 16.2.1972, S. Karthikeyan 40142 (MH).

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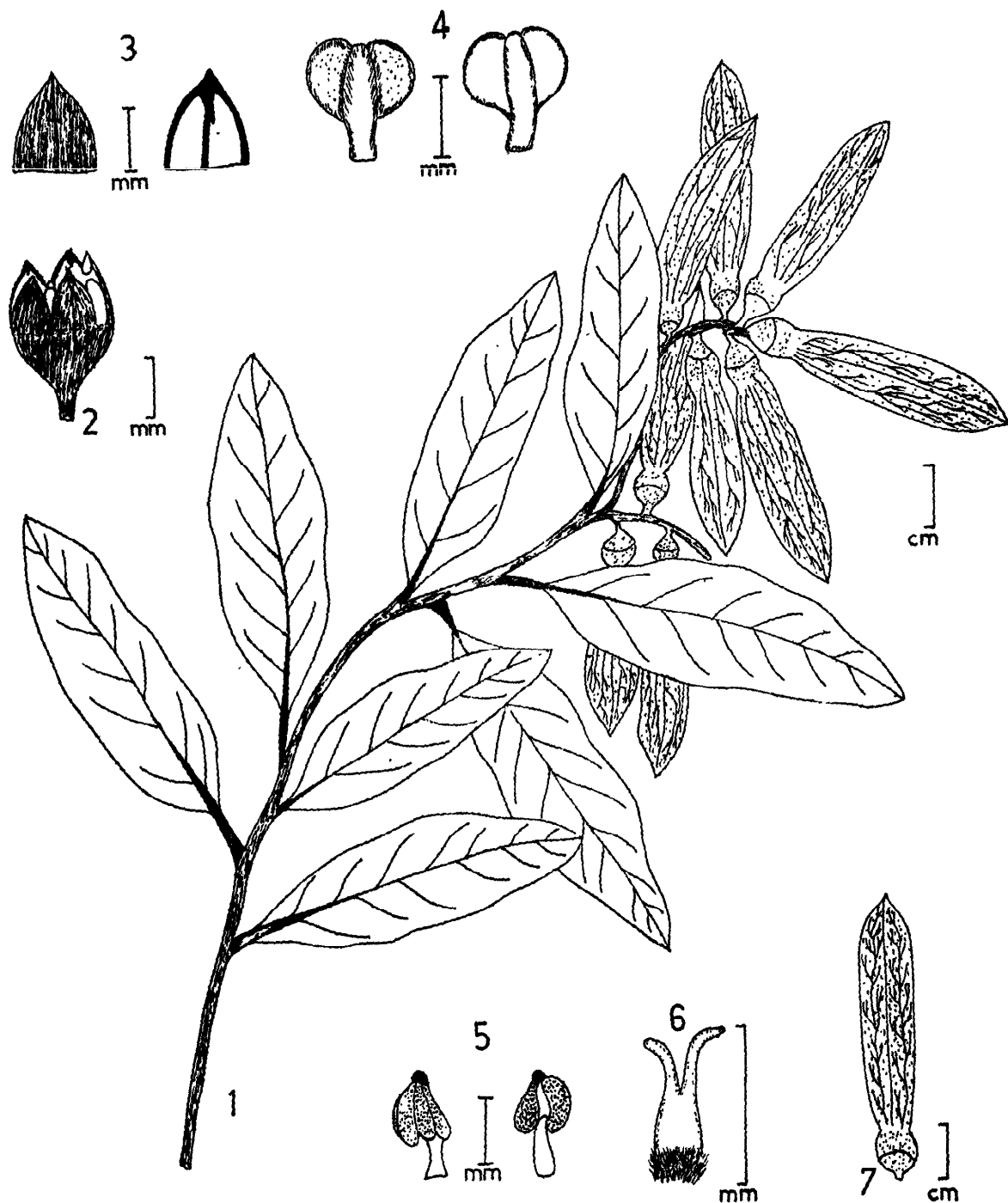
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Figs. 1-7: *Ventilago goughii* Gamble—1. Fruiting twig. 2. Flower. 3. Sepal (Dorsal and ventral views). 4. Petal (Dorsal and ventral views). 5. Stamen (Dorsal and ventral views). 6. Style, 7. Fruit.