

# ADDITIONS TO THE GENUS *ARISTOLOCHIA* L. (ARISTOLOCHIACEAE) IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

Two *Aristolochias* viz. *Aristolochia jackii* Steud., a Malesian species hitherto not known from India and *A. indica* L. although occurring in mainland India but not recorded from Andaman & Nicobar Islands, both have been collected recently from Great Nicobar Island and South Andamans respectively and reported along with detailed descriptions, relevant figures and keys to *Aristolochias* occurring in these Islands.

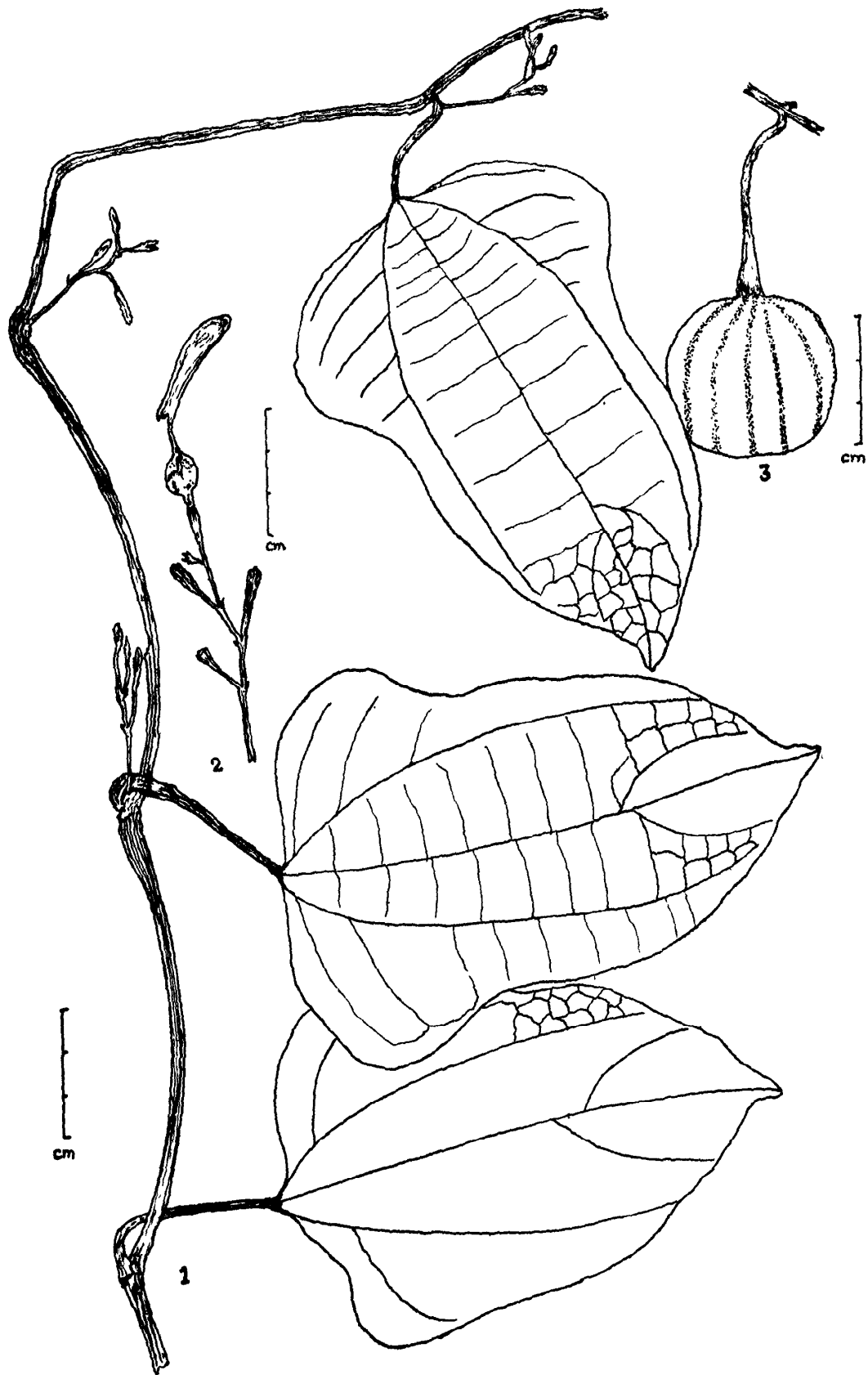
*Aristolochia* L. comprising of about 350 species, is distributed in tropical and temperate regions of the world. Hooker (1886) described 7 species from India. Santapau & Henry (1973) recorded 15 species from India. Nair (1968) described *A. gourigangia* a new species from Kumaon hills. Thus a total of 16 species in *Aristolochia* are known to occur in India. Vasudeva Rao (1986) listed only one species, viz. *A. tagala* Cham. from Andaman & Nicobar islands.

During the exploration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands the authors collected two more *Aristolochias*, viz. *A. jackii* Steud. from Great Nicobar Island and *A. indica* L. from Mount Harriet (South Andaman). Further studies of herbarium specimens and literature revealed that *A. jackii*, a Malesian species hitherto unknown from India, has now extended distribution to Andaman and Nicobar Islands. *A. indica* is so far known to occur almost throughout the country, except Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The occurrence of *A. indica* in South Andamans is thus an addition to the Flora of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

As both the species are phytogeographically interesting, detailed descriptions along with keys to the species of *Aristolochia* occurring in Andaman and Nicobar islands is provided here to facilitate identification.

- 1a. Leaves trilobed ...*A. jackii*
- 1b. Leaves entire:
  - 2a. Leaves broadly ovate, deeply cordate at base; racemes 4-flowered ...*A. tagala*
  - 2b. Leaves oblong to elliptic lanceolate, obtuse or subcordate at base; racemes 8-15-flowered ...*A. indica*

***Aristolochia jackii*** Steud., Nom. Bot. ed. 2, 1 : 132. 1840; Ding Hou in Blumea 28 : 230. 1983. *A. hastata* Jack, Malay Misc. 2, 7 : 6. 1822. *A. ungulifolia* Masters in J. Linn. Soc. Bot. 14 : 494. 1875; King & Gamble in J. As. Soc. Beng. 75, 2 : 30. 1912; Ridley, Fl. Malay Pen. 3 : 18. 1924. Slender climber. Stem longitudinally striated, somewhat angular. Leaves 9-16 cm long, trilobed, shortly narrowed, cordate at base, central lobe 3-8 × 5-6.5 cm, broadly oblong, obtuse or acute at apex, lateral lobes curved, rounded, obtuse at apex, thinly coriaceous, glabrous on both the surfaces, trinerved at base; lateral nerves 1-2 pairs, distinct, flattened above, slightly elevated beneath; petioles 4.7-7 cm long, glabrous, channelled above at base. Inflorescences in axillary racemes, 1.5-4 cm long; peduncle 7-15 mm long; flowers 4-5; bract *ca* 1 mm long, ovate, acute, glabrous, except at margin; pedicel *ca* 5 mm long, glabrous. Perianth *ca* 5.5 cm long, with 4-5 longitudinal veins running up to the base, pale violet; limb 2 × 1 cm, oblique, 2-tipped, oblong-spathulate, pubescent inside when young, glabrescent at maturity; tube *ca* 1.2 cm long, funnel-shaped with a triangular mouth; base dilated, 1.5 cm long, puberulous inside. Gynostegium *ca* 2 mm long, with triangular 6-fid apex; anthers 12, 2-celled, *ca* 1 mm long. Ovary 7 mm long, glabrous with 6 longitudinal striations corresponding to 6 inner locules. Capsule *ca* 3-4 cm across, globular, smooth, 6-valved. (Figs. 1-3).



Figs. 1-3: *Aristolochia jackii* Steud.—1. A flowering twig (Habit). 2. A flower. 3. A fruit.

*Fl. & Fr.* : June-Sept.

*Distribution* : India (Great Nicobar); Sumatra, Borneo.

*Ecology* : Growing in inland forests, climbing on *Ficus* tree associated with *Merremia peltata*.

*Exsiccata* : India : Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Great Nicobar, 38 km. on E-W Road, 24.6.91, S. K. Srivastava 21032 (PBL); Great Nicobar, Laful forest, near Laful nallah, 19.5.1981, R. P. Dwivedi 8543 (PBL).

***Aristolochia indica*** L., Sp. Pl. 960. 1753; Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 5 : 75. 1886; Gamble, Fl. Madras 2 : 1202 (841) 1925. *A. lanceolata* Wight, Ic. Pl. Ind. Or. t. 1858. 1852.

Slender twinner. Leaves 6.5-12.5 × 2-5 cm, oblong to lanceolate or rarely elliptic, obtuse or subcordate at base, acuminate at apex, membranous, glabrous; lateral nerves 5-8 pairs, distinct; midrib grooved above, flattened beneath; petioles 1-2 cm long, slender. Inflorescence axillary, ca 3 cm long; pedicel 1-1.5 cm long; flower ca 7 cm long; tube ca 3 cm long, puberulous inside the mouth, up to 1 cm across; limb 1-lipped; lip ca 4 cm long, rolled back. Stamens 6; anthers oblong, small. Ovary ca 1 cm long, glabrous; style ca 3 mm long, erect, with 3 stigmatic lobes, ca 2 mm in diam. Capsules 4 × 2 cm; seeds oblong, obtuse, laterally winged.

*Fl.* : Dec.-Jan.

*Distribution* : Throughout mainland in

India, Andaman Islands; Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh.

*Ecology* : Rare, inland forests of Mt. Harriet hills in open places.

*Exsiccata* : India : Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andaman Islands, Mt. Harriet, 7.12.89. S. P. Mathew 20416 (PBL).

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