

STATUS OF *CALLIGONUM POLYGONOIDES* L. IN INDIA - A NOTE

During the course of floristic studies in Rajasthan the author has found that *Calligonum polygonoides* L., is disappearing from the natural habitats due to excessive cutting and digging out of the roots of the plant for various purposes. A perusal of literature indicates that previously the species was distributed throughout the N.W. Rajasthan and parts of Punjab, Sindh and N.E. Afghanistan (Brandis, 1874), but has now become restricted in certain scattered pockets. This is the only species of the genus occurring in India.

***Calligonum polygonoides* L., Sp. Pl. 530, 1753.**
"Phog", "Phogaro".

Branched small tree, often shrub-like. Branches flexuous, slender; lvs. ochreate; fls. in axillary fascicles, pedicels jointed; perianth pinkish-white, 5; fr. oblong, coated with tuberculate based stiff hairs.

Fl. : March-April; *Fr.* : May-June.

Distribution : India-Sandy plains of N. W. India. West and Central Asia and Africa.

Ecology : During summer season the bushes are covered with the fragrant pinkish flowers. It occurs commonly with *Sad்வadora oleoides* Decne., *Acacia jacquemontii* Benth., and *Aerva javanica* (Burm.f.) Merrill., in groups or clumps.

The species is on the verge of threat due to following reasons:

(i) Increased grazing pressure on the species in the absence of alternative fodder plants in the area, because goats, sheep and camel eagerly browse its shoots and branchlets.

(ii) Woody stem and root portions are used for manufacturing household and agricultural implements.

(iii) It supplies the demand of fuel in the area.

(iv) Charcoal made from roots of the plant is used by black-smiths and gold-smiths because of its high heat value.

(v) Branches are used for making wattle-walls of the huts in arid and semi-arid regions.

(vi) Destruction of natural habitats coupled with its slow regeneration is rendering this as threatened in the area.

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