

SOME PLANT RECORDS

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In the course of exploration of the Northern States of the country, the authors visited some parts of the Panjab, Garhwal and Kumaon Himalayas and also a few places in the plains of Panjab and Uttar Pradesh. During these collection tours some plants of interest were met with which had not been reported from the localities visited by them. It was, therefore, thought useful to place them on record. While none of these species is new to science, the occurrence of these plants in new localities, in some cases, far away from the places where they were originally collected is of interest.

COMPOSITAE

Enhydra fluctuans Lour. F.B.I. III: 304.

A marsh herb common along the sides of ponds and streams, sometimes partly floating with elongate stems and rooting at the nodes (Figs. 1 & 2) was collected from the banks of a stream near Rishikesh in Uttar Pradesh. It was also found along the Song river near Dehra Dun. There appears to be no record of the occurrence of this species from this part of the country. It has not been mentioned in any of the local floras. Its distribution is given as Bengal, Assam and Lower Burma. Hooker (1882) further mentions that the range of distribution of this species extends to Sumatra, Malaya and China. The plant is said to possess laxative properties and is also considered useful in skin and nervous afflictions (Chopra et al. 1956).

Song river Bank, Dehra Dun 23rd February 1957, M. A. Rau, Coll. No. 1761.

Rishikesh, U.P. 18th March 1958, M. A. Rau, Coll. No. 3892.

PRIMULACEAE

Primula pulchra Watt. F.B.I. III: 483.

A small glabrous herb with purple flowers previously known only from Sikkim has been recently collected in Kashmir. This appears to be the first record of its occurrence in the western Himalayas.

Apharwat, Kashmir (alt. 4330 m). 6th July 1956. T. A. Rao, Coll. No. 464.

GENTIANACEAE

Menyanthes trifoliata Linn. F.B.I. IV: 130.

A perennial herb with long-petioled 3-foliate leaves. A scape-like long peduncle bears white to bluish flowers. The distribution of this species is given as Europe, N. Asia, N. America, the Caucasus, Amurland and Japan (C. B. Clarke in F.B.I. Vol. IV, 1885). It has been previously collected in Kashmir but is only scantily represented in the Indian herbaria. This plant was recently collected near the Khajiar lake in Chamba District of Himachal Pradesh and as far as the authors are aware, this is the first record of its occurrence in the area. The plant is said to resemble the gentian in its medicinal properties and appears to have been extensively employed in European medicine in the past.

Lake Khajiar, Chamba, H.P. 10th May 1957, M. A. Rau, Coll. No. 2562.

SCROPHULARIACEAE

Alectra thomsonii Hk.f. F.B.I. IV: 297.

An erect rigid herb, 15-20 cms. high, with a swollen rootstock, upto 4 cms. in length and 0.8 cms. in diameter. The rootstock is brittle, turmeric-yellow inside when fresh but blackens on drying (Fig. 3). Leaves scale-like upto 0.5 cms., alternately arranged. Flowers orange-yellow, solitary in axils of bracts.

This interesting, apparently parasitic, herb has been previously reported from South India, Singbhum and Chanda in Madhya Pradesh and from the Parasnath hill of Bihar.* During a recent collection tour in the Banda District of Uttar Pradesh, several specimens of this species were found in association with *Vitex negundo* L., in the neighbourhood of Chitrakut along the border of Uttar Pradesh and Satna District of Madhya Pradesh. The plant is locally known as "Nirgundi" and is claimed to possess valuable medicinal properties as a powerful tonic. This property of the plant has not been mentioned in literature and needs further investigation. A point of interest, however, is that this apparent parasite bears the same local name "Nirgundi" as that commonly applied to *Vitex negundo* (Verbenaceae) which in this

* Since this paper was prepared for publication, Raizada (Proc. Nat. Inst. Sci. India, 24: 1958) has reported the occurrence of *Alectra thomsonii* Hk. (from a collection of Sri Ram in 1921 in Banda) as a new record for the Upper Gangetic Plain.

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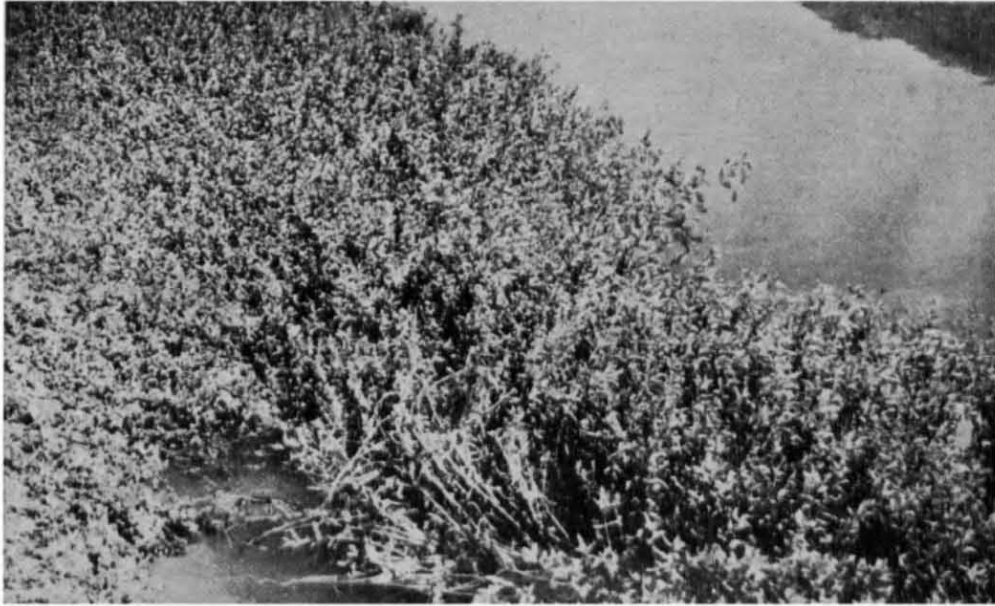


Fig: 1. *Enhydra fluctuans* Lour



Fig: 2. *Enhydra fluctuans* Lour.

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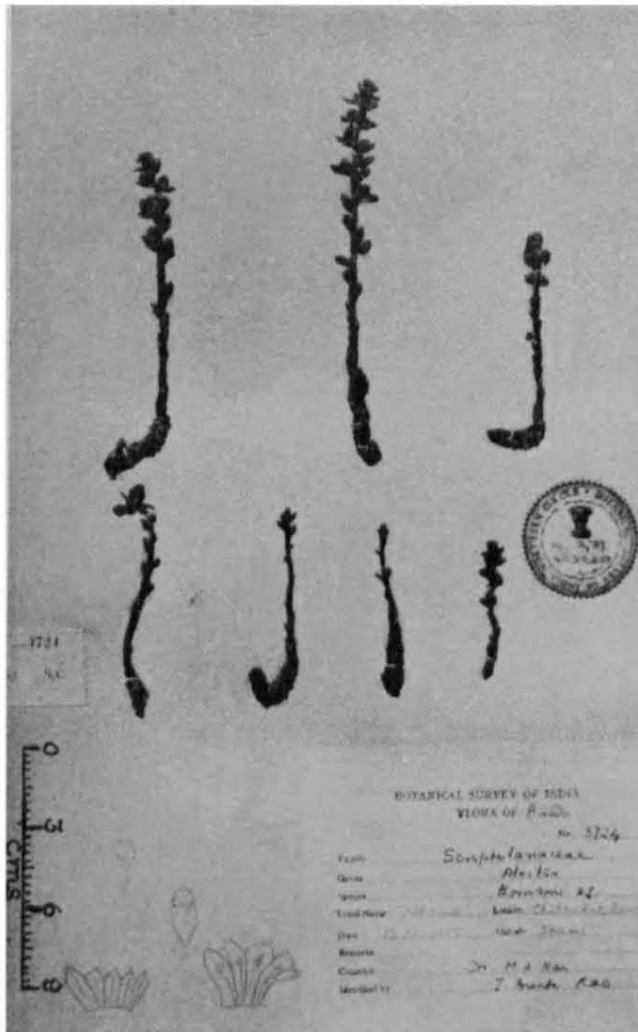


Fig: 3. *Alectra thomsonii* Hk. f.

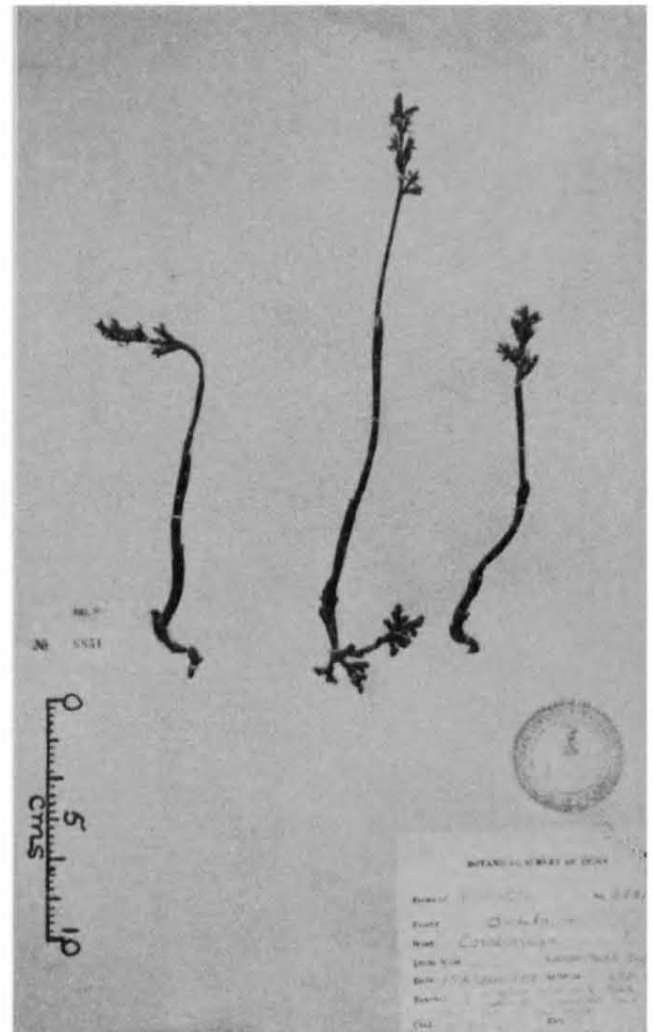


Fig: 4. *Corallorhiza trifida* Chatel.

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case appears to be the host. Instances are known where the active principles found in the host accumulate within a parasite and it is to be wondered whether the medicinal property of *Alectra* in this instance is to be attributed to its association with *Vitex negundo*.

Chitrakut, Banda Dist. 12th November 1957, M. A. Rau, Coll. No. 3724.

URTICACEAE

Three species of *Elatostema* have been collected from new localities in western Himalayas. These species have been previously reported from Central Himalayas (Nepal) and the Eastern Himalayas.

Elatostema cuneatum Wt. F.B.I. V: 568.

The distribution of the above species as given in Hooker's Flora of British India is Sikkim Himalayas, the Concan, Tenasserim, Mergui and Java. It has not been mentioned in the catalogue of Kumaon plants of Strachey (1906) nor is any reference made to it in any of the local floras.

Loharkhet, Kumaon, alt. 2000 m., 26th September 1957, T. A. Rao, Coll. No. 4252.

Kansrao, Dehra Dun, alt. 600 m., 5th November, 1957, T. A. Rao, Coll. No. 3459.

Elatostema ficoides Wedd. F.B.I. V: 563.

Distribution: Central and Eastern Himalayas, 1300-2600 m. Nepal, Sikkim, Khasia, Manipur. This species was collected recently in Kumaon between Kathi and Dwali at an altitude of 2500 m.

Dwali, Kumaon, alt. 2500 m. 22nd September 1957, T. A. Rao, Coll. No. 4309.

Elatostema rupestre Wedd. F.B.I. V: 564.

Distribution: Nepal, Khasia Mts. 300-1300 m., Chittagong, Java.

The above species was also collected in Kumaon be-

tween Kapkot and Loharkhet at an altitude of about 1500 m.

Kapkot, Kumaon, alt. 1500 ft. 19th September 1957, T. A. Rao, Coll. No. 4200.

ORCHIDACEAE

Corallorhiza trifida Chatel.

Syn. *Corallorhiza innata* R. Br. F.B.I. V. 710.

This interesting orchid with coralloid roots (Fig. 4) has been recently collected in Kumaon. Hooker (1885) mentions *Corallorhiza innata* as having been collected by Jacquemont in Kashmir but there are no specimens from any part of India in the Indian Herbaria. This specimen has been kindly determined at Kew by Mr. V. S. Summerhayes who reports that it agrees quite well with *C. trifida* Chatel which sometimes has an unspotted labellum, particularly in the more southern parts of its range. The species is distributed in Europe, North Asia and North America.

Martoli Bugyal, Kumaon, alt. 4500 m. 15th July 1958, T. A. Rao, Coll. No. 6851.

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