

A NOTE ON THE FIRST REPORT OF *DIOSCOREA NUMMULARIA* LAMK.  
IN INDIA FROM ANDAMAN ISLANDS

During the course of revising family Dioscoreaceae for the flora of Andaman & Nicobar Islands the authors have come across an interesting *Dioscorea* Specimen deposited at PBL. A critical study of the herbarium specimens and literature reveals that the specimens belong to *Dioscorea nummularia* hitherto an unrecorded species from India, which is known to occur in Malaysia, Pacific, Eastern Indo-China and Java.

*Dioscorea* L. is represented by ca 600 species, distributed in tropical and subtropical region of the world (Airy Shaw, 1973). J.D. Hooker (1892) described twenty five species of *Dioscorea* from India and its neighbouring countries of which, sixteen species were known to occur in India. He has included *D. angulata* Roxb. under imperfectly known and undeterminable species and also stated "I have found no other refernce to this species." Subsequently Karthikeyan et al., (1989) in Flora Indica Enumeratio included thirty two species and twenty five varieties of *Dioscorea* from North West Himalayas to N.E. India, Peninsular India and also in Andaman & Nicobar. He has also included *Dioscorea nummularia* Lam. and kept *D. angulata* Roxb. as a synonym under the *D. nummularia* with a question mark about its locality in India, probably based on Hooker's statement.

Vasudeva Rao (1986) listed six species of *Dioscorea* from Andaman & Nicobar but did not included *D. nummularia* from these Islands. Thus *D. nummularia* is an addition to the Indian flora from Andaman Islands. A brief nomenclatural citation with description along with the exsiccata is provided.

*Dioscorea nummularia* Lam., Encycl. 3 : 231. 1789; Burkil in Steenis, Fl. Males. I. 4 : 331. 1951; Karthikeyan et al., Fl. Ind. Enum.-Monocot. 75. 1989. *D. angulata* Roxb. in Steud., Nomencl. Ed. 2. 1 : 511. 1840; Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 6 : 296. 1892.

Climbers: stem armed at base. Leaves herba-  
ceous, opposite or alternate, 11 × 9 cm, cordate to

broadly elliptic, rounded at base, abruptly acuminate at apex; lateral nerves 5-7 pairs; petiole ca 7 cm long. Male flowering axis 1-4, aggregated on leafless branches, 4 cm long, with ca 50 flowers, buds globose. Female flowering axis 1-2 together, axis angled, 15 cm long. Capsules obtuse at base, retuse at apex: wings 20 × 22 mm, stipe 5 mm.

Fl. & Fr. : Sept. - March.

Distrib. : India : Andaman & Nicobar Is-lands: Malaysia, Pacific, Eastern Indo-China and Java.

Ecol : Climbers growing on sandy loam in inland forest edges.

Exsiccata studied : INDIA : Andaman & Nicobar Islands : Middle Andaman, Rangat, 4. 11. 1977, N. Bhargava 6362 (PBL) : Mayabunder, Nimboodera, 8. 11. 1977, N. Bhargava 6451 (PBL) : South Andamans, Dhanikhari, 7. 12. 1977, R. K. Premnath 6724 (PBL) Nayashahar, 5. 3. 1978, P. Basu 6649 (PBL) : Middle Andaman, Mayabunder, Austin II, 12. 11. 1990 P. L. Narasimhan 15287 (PBL).

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