ASYSTASIA MYSORENSIS (ROTH)
T. AND.: AN ADDITION TO
THE FLORA OF RAJASTHAN, INDIA

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Asystasia myosorensis (Roth) T. And. of family Acanthaceae, has so far not been reported from Rajasthan and thus is being reported for the first time. In India, this genus is represented by eight species. The detailed description, up to date nomenclature, time of flowering-fruiting, ecological notes, photographs of the species have been presented in the paper.

Key words: Asystasia myosorensis, Acanthaceae, New record, Rajasthan, India.

Rajasthan is the largest State of India, occupying an area of about 3, 48, 861 sq. km i.e. nearly 11 percent of the total area of India. It forms the eastern extremity of the great arid and semi-arid belt of the world. During botanical explorations in southern Rajasthan, the author collected some plant specimens from Kushal Garh (23°10' N Latitude and 74°27' E Longitude) in Banswara district of Rajasthan. After a thorough survey of literature (Moorthy 2001; Khanna et al., 1997), critical examination and expert opinion from Botanical Survey of India, Arid Zone Regional Centre, Jodhpur, these specimens were determined as Asystasia myosorensis (Roth) T. And., belonging to the family Acanthaceae, a taxon not recorded by the earlier workers from Rajasthan (Bhandari 1987, Sharma and Tyagi 1979, Shetty and Pandey 1983, Singh 1983, Shetty and Singh 1991, Prasad et al. 1996, Sharma 2002, Tiagi and Aery 2007, Meena 2010a, b, 2013a, b, c, 2014a, b, Meena and Yadav 2010, Yadav and Meena 2011). Recently, Meena (2013d) have further added to our knowledge about the Acanthaceae flora form Sitamata wildlife sanctuary and reported 20 species from southern Rajasthan. But Asystasia myosorensis (Roth) T. And. has not been reported so far from Rajasthan. Thus, the present paper provides description, phenology data and Photographs are to facilitate its easy identification in the field.

The genus Asystasia Blume, was established by Blume in 1826. This genus consists of 70 species distributed in the tropical region of old words mostly in Africa (Khanna et al. 1997; Mabberbey 1997). The species has been reported from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh by Moorthy (2001) and Khanna et al. (1997). In India this genus has been represented by 8 species (Samvatsar 1996). During the recent floristic survey of the Banswara, author came across one interesting plant specimen of Asystasia myosorensis (Roth) T. And. The report of its occurrence from the Rajanasthan is the first report for western India. Thus, present findings constitute a new record for Rajasthan and extends its distribution in India.

ENUMERATION:


Erect annual herb, up to 1 tall. Stem quadrangular, grooved, shortly hairy. Leaves simple, petiolate, entire, 3 - 10 X 2.5 - 5 cm, elliptic- oblong, base acute, apex acute to acuminate, roughish above, hairy on upper nerves, lower nerves densely hairy. Inflorescence terminal spike, up to 5 cm long.
Flowers sessile, white, shorter than bracts, 2-5 cm long, 2-lipped, upper lip 4-lobed, lower one unlobed. Bracts enclosing flower, 1-2 × 0.5 cm, lanceolate, large, acute, exceeding 10 mm, green, 3-nerved, hairy. Bracteoles lanceolate. Calyx lobes 5, linear, upto 1 cm long, equal, pubescent. Corolla tubular, sub-equal, up to 2 cm long, 2-lobed, upper lobe again 2-lobed, lower one 3-lobed, imbricate in bud. Stamens 4, subsimilar; anther-cells one a little below the other, minutely mucronate at the base. Ovary superior, bi-celled, hairy; style slender; stigmas 2. Capsule 1.3 - 2 cm long, 1-4 seeded, glandular-pubescent, opening with 2 valves. Seeds angular, obliquely ovoid, flat, compressed with dentate margins, faces tuberculate with hexagonal areolae along edges.

**Flowering and Fruiting:** September-December.

**Ecological notes:** Rare in moist wastelands, amidst grasses on exposed dry slopes. It is used as fodder to goat. At the beginning of rainy season leaves and young shoots are consumed as the substitute of green vegetables.

**Specimens examined:** India, Rajasthan, Banswara district, Kushalgarh, 29 October 14, MeenaM-742 (Herbarium, department of botany, M.L.V. Government College, Bhilwara).

**Distribution:** Africa, (from Ethiopia and Eritrea to Namibia and South Africa) and India (Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra).

Author is grateful to the Dr. Vinod Maina,
Scientist & Add. Director BSI, Jodhpur and Dr. S. L. Meena Scientist BSI, Jodhpur for confirmation of the identity of specimens, valuable suggestions and deposition of specimens to the Botanical Survey of India, Arid Zone Regional Centre, Jodhpur. I am also grateful to Dr. B. L. Yadav, Department of Botany, MLV Govt. College, Bhilwara for valuable critically going through the manuscript and providing facilities. I am also grateful to Dr. J. P. Gupta, Head department of Botany, MLV Govt. College, Bhilwara for encouragement. Thanks are also due to Principal and Vice Principals of MLV Government College, Bhilwara for providing the laboratory facilities. Financial assistance provided by UGC New Delhi, is gratefully acknowledged.

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