



Dendrobium kratense (Orchidaceae): A new record for India from Andaman Islands

K. Prasad, M. Bheemalingappa and B. Ravi Prasad Rao*

Biodiversity Conservation Division, Department of Botany, Sri Krishnadevaraya University
Anantapur – 515 003, Andhra Pradesh, India

*E-mail: biodiversityravi@gmail.com

Abstract

Dendrobium kratense Kerr, collected from the Middle Andaman Islands, is recorded for the first time from India. A detailed description, photographs, distribution and phenology is provided here.

Keywords: Andaman Islands, *Dendrobium kratense*, India, new record

Introduction

The genus *Dendrobium* Sw., one of the largest genera of Orchidaceae with about 900 species, is distributed mostly in the tropical and warm Asia to Australia and Pacific (Mabberley, 2005). The genus is represented in India by 116 species (Misra, 2007) and in Andaman and Nicobar Islands by 19 species (Rao *et al.*, 2012). During the recent botanical explorations in the Middle Andaman Islands, authors collected curious orchid specimens from the inland evergreen forests, which after critical study have been identified as *Dendrobium kratense* Kerr. Thorough perusal of literature has revealed that this species has not been recorded from India till date and reported endemic to Thailand (Seidenfaden, 1985). A detailed description and photographs of the species are provided here for easy identification.

***Dendrobium kratense* Kerr, Bull. Misc. Inform. Kew 1927(5): 217. 1927.**

Fig. 1

Type: THAILAND, **Siam**, Kao Saming, 25.11.1924, A.F.G. Kerr 0193 (K00596878!).

Epiphytic herbs, c. 25 cm high. Roots many, greyish-green, vermiform, to 0.6 mm thick, unbranched. Stems erect or pendulous, aggregate, elongated, slender, terete, to 4 mm thick, thickened towards the apex; internodes c. 2 cm long, covered with brown-coloured veined sheaths. Leaves few, alternate, distichous, sub-membranous, sessile, linear-lanceolate or linear-oblong, c. 7 × 1 mm, obliquely bilobed at apex, entire at margins, sheathing at base. Inflorescence terminal or axillary, shorter than the leaves, sub-erect or pendulous, c. 4 cm long, in

racemes; peduncle short, slender, terete, c. 0.8 mm thick, nodes with sheathing sterile bracts; racemes c. 2 cm long, laxly 2-9-flowered. Floral bracts short, light brown, slightly deflexed, elliptic-ovate, c. 4 × 1.5 mm, acuminate, 1-veined. Pedicel with ovary greenish-white, slightly ribbed, c. 6 mm long, 0.5-1 mm thick, curved at apex. Flowers fragrant, c. 1.2 cm across, not widely opening, sepals and petals white, lip whitish-light green with strong dark green veins. Sepals subequal, gland dotted; dorsal sepal concave, incurved above the middle, oblong-linear, c. 10 × 3 mm, acute, apical margins involute, 5-veined; lateral sepals falcate, obliquely oblong-lanceolate, c. 10 × 2.5 mm, acute, margins involute, 5-veined, base adnate to the column foot to form the mentum; mentum funnel shaped, c. 7 mm long, rounded at apex, slightly incurved. Petals suberect, linear-oblong, c. 9 × 1.5 mm, acute, gland dotted, 3-veined. Lip adnate to the column foot, shortly clawed at base, elliptic-ovate, c. 12 × 4.5 mm, 3-lobed; side lobes erect, more or less connivent over the column, narrow, incurved, elongated, c. 5 mm long, with entire margins, veined; midlobe much recurved, ovate-triangular, c. 4 × 3.5 mm, acute, strongly much wavy and crispate; disk with calli, running from base to starting of the midlobe, middle one slightly longer than the side ones, calli elevated. Column short, greenish-white, erect, oblong-ovate, c. 2 × 1.5 mm, lateral arms acute, base producing into foot; foot long, c. 6 mm long, rounded at apex. Stigma short, deep-seated, suborbicular-ovate, c. 1.5 × 1 mm; rostellum minute. Anthers terminal, white, sub-quadrate, c. 1 × 1 mm, 2-loculed; pollinia 4 in



Fig. 1. *Dendrobium kratense* Kerr: **a.** Habit; **b.** Inflorescence; **c.** Flowers

unequal pairs, yellow, narrow-oblong, *c.* 1.2 × 0.6 mm. Capsules not seen.

Flowering: November – December

Habitat & Ecology: On moss covered trunks of *Mangifera indica* in inland evergreen forests at an altitude range 20-50m, very rare.

Distribution: Thailand, now in India (Andaman Islands).

Specimen examined: INDIA, **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**, Middle Andamans, Kousalyanagar, 15.12.2012, K. Prasad & M. Bheemalingappa 44449 (SKU).

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