



Dendrobium crumenatum (Orchidaceae): A new record for mainland India

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Abstract

Dendrobium crumenatum Sw. (Orchidaceae), earlier known from Andaman & Nicobar Islands, is reported for the first time from the mainland of India. Brief description, illustration and photographs are provided.

Keywords: *Dendrobium crumenatum*, Orchidaceae, new record, India

Introduction

The genus *Dendrobium* Sw. is one of the largest and most widespread genera in the Orchidaceae with about 800–1400 species (epiphytic or lithophytic). It is distributed from China, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Japan, Malaya, Indonesia to New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands (Garay & Sweet, 1974; Pearce & Cribb, 2002; Seidenfaden, 1985; Tsi, 1999; Wood, 2006). Among them 116 species are known to occur in India (Misra, 2007). The genus has 20 species in Kerala (Sasidharan, 2013; Mathew *et al.* 2014).

During botanical exploration along the Western Ghats of Kerala, the first author collected specimens of *Dendrobium* species from the wet evergreen forests of Shenduruni Wildlife Sanctuary in Kollam district of Kerala. The plants were grown at Calicut University Botanical Garden. Critical studies revealed it to be *D. crumenatum* Sw., a species so far known from Seychelles, Taiwan, India (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Borneo, Java, Laos, Malaysia, Moluccas, Philippines, Sulawesi, Sumatra, Christmas Is., New Guinea, Fiji, Hawaii (Kew WCSP). It is probably introduced and naturalised in Sri Lanka (Jayaweera, 1981). The present finding is the first new record of this species in wild for the mainland India from the Southern Western Ghats. A brief description and photographs are provided here for easy identification of this orchid.

Dendrobium crumenatum Sw. in J. Bot. (Shrader) 2: 237.1800; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4:151.1898; Jayaweera in Dassanayake & Fosberg, Revis.

Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 79-1981; Sinha in Hajra & Rao, Fl. Great Nicobar Island 429. 1999.

Onychium crumenata (Sw.) Blume, Bijdr. Fl. Ned. Ind. 7: 326.1825.

Callista crumenata (Sw.) Kuntze, Revis. Gen. Pl. 2: 653. 1891.

Dendrobium schmidtianum Kraenzl., Bot.Tidsskr. 24: 7. 1900.

Debdrobium caninum Merr., Philipp. J. Sci. 19: 344. 1921.

Fig. 1

Epiphytic herbs with pseudobulbous stems, usually leafless when in flower; stems 40–60 cm long, slightly compressed or cylindrical; pseudobulbs *c.* 2 cm in diameter, spindle-shaped. Leaves distichous, 4–5 × 0.5–1.3 cm, ovate-oblong, apex obtuse or unequally notched, base sheathing. Raceme arising from distal leafless part of stem, usually solitary, rarely 2-flowered; floral bracts 5 × 2.5 mm, oblong, sheathing the pedicel, many veined. Flowers white, fragrant, 3.5–4.5 cm broad; sepals and petals white; lateral tepals *c.* 2.5 × 9.5 cm, slightly larger than dorsal sepal, obliquely ovate-lanceolate; petals 18–25 × 6–7 mm, lanceolate, acute, lip 2.3–2.6 × 1–1.6 cm, obovate, truncate, midlobe broadly ovate, acuminate, margins crenulate parallel ridges extending along 3 mid veins upto middle of midlobe; column *ca.* 3 mm high.. Anther terminal, 2-loculed, 2.5 × 2.2 mm; pollinia 4, *c.* 2 × 0.5 mm, ovate-oblong. Ovary with pedicel *c.* 1.5 cm long. Fruits not seen.



Fig. 1. *Dendrobium crumenatum* Sw.: **a.** Habit; **b.** Flower buds; **c & d.** Flowers

Distribution: India (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, now in Kerala), Seychelles, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, La-os, Malaysia, Moluccas, Philippines, Sulaviesi, Sumatra, Christmas Island, New Guinea, Fiji and Hawaii.

Specimen examined: INDIA: **Kerala**, Pandimotta, Kollam District, 24.08.2014, *Arun T. Ram* 144001 (CALI).

Habitat: Growing in shady places on tree trunks in evergreen forest at an elevation of 1250 m in Pandimotta, Shenduruni Wildlife Sanctuary, Kollam District, Kerala.

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