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Original Research Article

Drymaria villosa Chamisso & Schlechtendal (Caryophyllaceae) - A New Report to the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu, India

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Abstract	Keywords
The genus <i>Drymaria</i> Willd. ex Schultes, belongs to Caryophyllaceae with ca. 48 species and it is native to Central and South America. During the floristic exploration in Sirumalai hills of Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu, <i>Drymaria villosa</i> Chamisso & Schlechtendal has been recorded and identified with careful scrutiny. The present record of this species from Sirumalai hills of Eastern Ghats, Dindigul district is of new report to this region.	<i>Drymaria villosa</i> Eastern Ghats Sirumalai hills

Introduction

The genus *Drymaria* Willd. ex Schultes, belongs to Caryophyllaceae (APG III, 2009) with ca. 48 species (Mabberly, 2008). *Drymaria villosa* Chamisso & Schlechtendal is native to Central and South America from Mexico to Patagonia. The Sirumalai hills situated in the Southern most part of the Eastern Ghats in Tamil Nadu are known for their rich biodiversity due to their closeness to the Kodaikanal hills of the Western Ghats. Sirumalai hills lie in the Dindigul district, between 10°00'-10°30'N and 77°33'-78°15'E at altitudes ranging from 400 to 1650 m.

Sirumalai hill ranges consist of highly distributed scrub forests. The tropical dry deciduous forest occupies the major portion of middle hill ranges and woodland savannahs are found along the slopes.

During the floristic exploration to the Sirumalai hills of Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu, *Drymaria villosa* (Fig. 1) have been collected, which is not collected previously from the Eastern Ghats (Sriganesan, 1984; Mathusuthanan, 1992; Muthurakku, 1992; Pullaiah and Rao, 2002; Brabhu et al., 2005; Reddy et al., 2006; Pullaiah et al., 2007; Kottaimuthu et al., 2008; Pallithanam and Matthew, 2001; Karuppusamy et al., 2001; Sankar et al., 2008).

Drymaria villosa Chamisso & Schlechtendal was reported as a low altitude species in Western Ghats of Coimbatore and Nilgiri (Nair and Henry, 1983). Matthew (1999) has collected this species at an elevation of 2400m from Palni Hills. In the present investigation, this species has been collected from the way of Puthur to Tholukadu, Sirumalai hills (Southern part of Eastern Ghats) at an elevation of 700 – 800m (Fig. 1).

The present record of this species from Sirumalai hills of Eastern Ghats, Dindigul district is of phytogeographical significance. Hence a brief description, phenological data, notes on distribution and specimens examined are

given here for easy identification of the taxa in the field and all the voucher specimens (Acc No.SJCBOT1177) are deposited in the Department of Botany, Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli.

Fig. 1: *Drymaria villosa* recorded from Sirumalai hills of Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu.



Taxonomic treatment

Drymaria villosa Chamisso & Schlechtendal in Linnaea 5: 232. 1830; Sharma et al. in Biol. Mem. 2(1 & 2): 16. 1977; Sharma & Balakrishnan, Fl. India 2: 533. 1993; Matthew, Suppl. III. Fl. Palni hills t. 760. 1998; Matthew, Fl. Palni hills, South India. Part-I, 78. 1999.

Herbs; stems diffuse, slender, rarely rooting at lower nodes, pilose or villosus. Leaves opposite, ovate-reniform, 10 – 17 x 15 – 10 cm, obscurely nerved, minutely pilose or glabrous. Flowers dichotomous branching, cymes. Peduncle 1.5 – 5.2 cm long; pedicel 2 cm long. Sepals ovate to elliptic, 2.5 – 3 x 1 mm long, membranous at margin, acute at apex, hairy. Corolla 2-lobed, white; oblong-linear, c. 3 mm long. Stamens 5;

filament shorter than the sepals, c. 2.5 mm long. Ovary ovoid, 2 – 3 mm long; style 3, shortly connate; stigma sessile-subulate. Capsule ovoid – subglobose, c. 3 mm long; seeds reniform, ovoid, tuberculate.

Habitat: Along the stream margins; in-between rocky crevices of moist deciduous and semi-evergreen forests, at an elevation of 800m.

Flowering: July – November;

Fruiting: March – May.

Distribution: India: West Bengal, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu; World: Nepal, Bhutan, Malaysia, Africa, Mexico and Central and South America.

Specimens examined: Eastern Ghats: Tamil Nadu: Dindigul District, on the way of Puthur to Tholukadu, Sirumalai hills, 700 m, 26-12-2013, AGCW BOT 119, Dhatchanamoorthy, N.

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