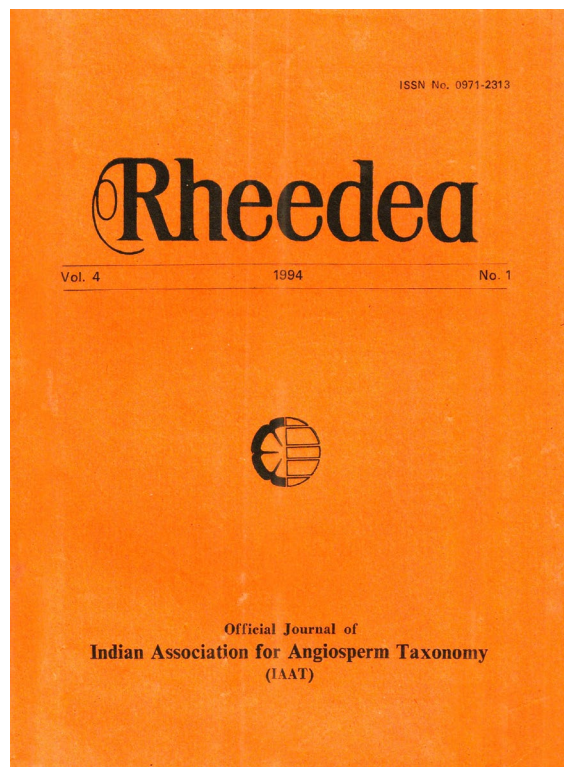




Berberis kunawurensis Royle var. *diversifolia*
(Berberidaceae), a new variety from E. Himalayas, India

Tariq Husain, Bhaskar Datt & R.R. Rao



How to cite:

Husain T., Datt B. & R.R. Rao 1994. *Berberis kunawurensis* Royle var. *diversifolia* (Berberidaceae), a new variety from E. Himalayas, India. *Rheedia* 4(1): 37–39.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.22244/rheedia.1994.04.01.08>

Published in print: 30.06.1994

Published Online: 01.01.2022

Berberis kunawurensis Royle, var. *diversifolia*
(Berberidaceae), a new variety from
E. Himalayas, India

Tariq Husain, Bhasker Datt and R. R. Rao

Taxonomy & Herbarium Division, National Botanical Research Institute,
Lucknow - 226 001.

Abstract

Berberis kunawurensis Royle var. *diversifolia* Ahrendt ex Husain, Datt & Rao, a new variety from E. Himalaya is described.

Berberis kunawurensis, originally described by Royle (1834) based on his collection (*Royle* s.n., K) from Punjab (Kunawur) and subsequently reduced to the synonymy of *B. vulgaris* L., var. *aetnensis* Hook. f. & Thoms. (1872) has now been reinstated as a distinct species (Parker, 1918; Ahrendt, 1961; Jafri, 1975). In fact, *B. kunawurensis* can be easily distinguished from *B. vulgaris* by their paniculate inflorescence and petals more or less equal to the inner sepals.

While studying the Indian *Berberis*, the authors came across an interesting specimen (*Kingdon-Ward* 20263, BM) which had all important characters of *Berberis kunawurensis* (such as paniculate inflorescence; petals as long as inner sepals; ovary with 2 ovules; berries estylose or very shortly styled), but different in certain other details, sufficient enough for varietal recognition. This fact was also recognised by Ahrendt who had annotated this sheet as "*B. kunawurensis* var. *diversifolia*", but did not publish it validly. The authors, having now studied both the typical form and this taxon, are convinced that the latter deserves formal taxonomic recognition at varietal level. The same is diagnosed and described here with necessary illustration.

***Berberis kunawurensis* Royle var. *diversifolia* Ahrendt ex Husain, Datt & Rao, var. nov.**

(Fig. 1)

Berberis kunawurensis Royle affinis, sed differt foliis coriaceis carmesinis vel scarlatinis cum venis arcte reticulatis bracteis usque ad 3 mm longis et baccis carmesinis vel scarlatinis.

Tariq Husain, Bhaskar Datt and R. R. Rao

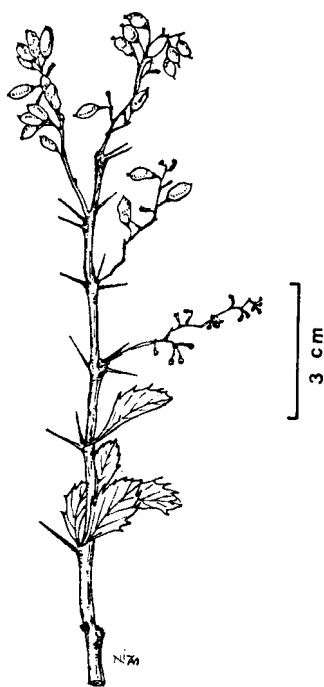


Fig. 1. *Berberis kunawurensis* Royle var. *diversifolia* Ahrendt ex Husain et al.

Typus: India: Assam, Walong, 10,000 ft, 9. 10. 1950, *Kingdon-ward* 20263 (holo, BM).

A dwarf, more or less erect shrub; young shoots red, minutely puberulous; mature stems sulcate, black tuberculate; internodes 1–1.8 cm long; spines 3-fid, 1–1.2 cm long, central spine slightly longer than the lateral ones. Leaves 1–2.6 × 0.5–1.4 cm, crimson or scarlet, coriaceous, narrowly obovate, apex rounded, base attenuate, margins 3–12 spinose, prominently reticulate on both surfaces; papillose on the upper surface. Panicle 10–22 flowered, 3.5–6 cm long, axis zig-zag; bracts upto 3 mm long. Flowers not observed. Berries crimson or scarlet, shortly stylose.

Habitat: Exposed grassy and rocky slopes, ca 3000 m in the temperate zone in E. Himalaya. Efforts should be made to relocate this taxon from the type locality.

The two varieties of *Berberis kunawurensis* can be identified by the following key:

Berberis kunawurensis Royle var. *diversifolia* (Berberidaceae)

1. Leaves green, membranous, acute to subacuminate at apex, with secondary veins not prominent on both surfaces, epapillose; panicles upto 4.5 cm long.....var. *kunawurensis*
1. Leaves crimson, coriaceous, rounded at apex with secondary veins prominent on both surfaces, papillose on the upper surface; panicles upto 6 cm long, axis more or less zig-zag; bracts up to 3 mm long.....var. *diversifolia*

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to the Director, National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, for facilities and to the authorities of British Museum (BM) for the loan of specimens.

Literature cited

- Ahrendt, L. W. A. 1961. *Berberis* and *Mahonia*- a taxonomic revision. *J. Linn. Soc. (Bot.)* 57, 1-410.
- Hooker, J. D. and Thomson, T. 1972. Berberidaceae, in J. D. Hooker, *Flora of British India*, London 1: 107-113.
- Jafri, S. M. H. 1975. Berberidaceae, in E. Nasir and S. I. Ali (Eds.) *Flora of West Pakistan*, Karachi, 87: 22.
- Parker, R. N. 1918. *A Forest Flora for the Punjab with Hazara and Delhi*, Lahore.
- Royle, J. F. 1834. *Illustration of the botany of the Himalayam Mountains*, London pl. 2, p. 64.