

## Seed plants of Karnataka, India: a concise dictionary

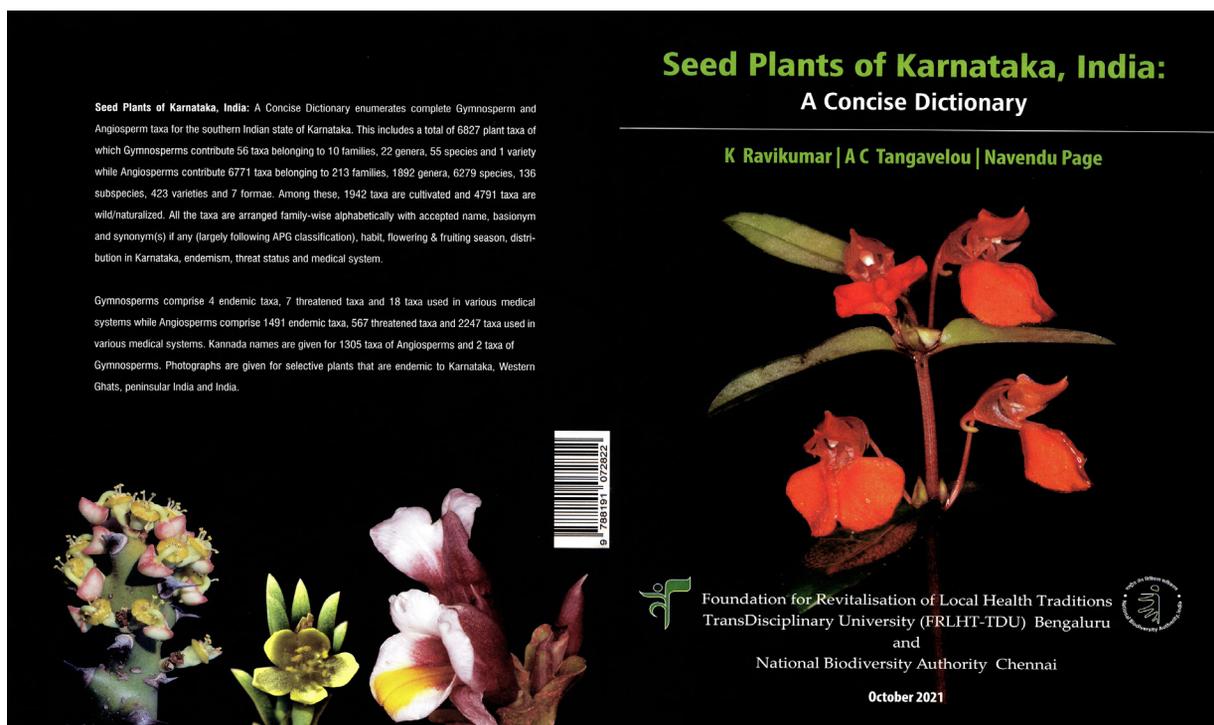
Ravikumar K., Tangavelau A.C. & N. Page

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Biodiversity, its conservation, bio-prospecting and sustainable utilization are some of the key issues of the present world. Biodiversity is a precious biological capital for the sustainable development of any region. Plant diversity, especially seed plant diversity, is the most important and indispensable commodity of the people. We may not know the use/s of a number of plants, but each of them plays an important role in the maintenance of a healthy ecosystem. Documentation of biodiversity is an uphill task and involves field survey, collection, identification, classification and nomenclature of species. A checklist serves as an index to the plants of a region which gives an idea of the approximate composition of a flora of that region. It forms the basis for a more thorough taxonomic studies on a region, bio-prospecting and utilization of bioresources, policy framing and conservation.

Karnataka is the seventh largest state in India with three prominent geographical zones, *i.e.* the Coastal plains, the Western Ghats and the Deccan plateau. Due to these ecological gradients, the state harbours a very diverse and rich vegetation from tropical wet evergreen forests to scrub jungles supporting a rich diversity of flowering plants. “Seed plants of Karnataka, India: a concise dictionary” authored by Ravikumar, Tangavelou and Page is an important documentation of seed plants with bare minimum but very relevant information on each taxon. This concise dictionary is an enumeration of seed plants of Karnataka state. The families are arranged as per the APG IV system of classification (The Angiosperm Phylogeny Group, 2016). A total of 6,827 taxa consisting of 56 gymnosperms and 6,771 angiosperms belonging to 223 families



and 1,914 genera are reported for the state. A brief account of the biogeography, topology, and forest types of Karnataka state is provided in the introduction. Along with data on the dominant families and genera of angiosperms in Karnataka, valuable family-level analyses of seed plant taxa are depicted in tabular form. Morphological features, important forests types and habitats in Karnataka are presented by quality photographs providing a virtuous understanding of the vegetation. A total of 1,491 endemic taxa to India are recorded, of which 158 taxa are reported to be exclusively endemic to Karnataka. The dictionary includes 712 quality images of 501 taxa accommodated in 46 photo plates. The enumeration of the seed plants provide the currently accepted binomials, basionym/s, and synonym/s followed by habit, name in Kannada, flowering and fruiting time, distribution in Karnataka, endemism, threat status and medicinal uses in different medical systems for each taxon.

A recent checklist of gymnosperms and angiosperms of Karnataka by Sanjappa and Sringeswara (2019), published by the Karnataka Biodiversity Board is available. However, the present dictionary reports 1,792 additional taxa of seed plants for the state and is well illustrated. The dictionary is in hardbound form and comprises 836 pages and is moderately priced at Rs. 2000. This dictionary is designed in such a way that stakeholders from different fields can understand it and have access to get brief but most essential information on each taxon. The enumeration of the seed plants in this dictionary provides a baseline data for further research as well as the threat analysis and would help in building the conservation strategies for the rare and threatened taxa. This concise dictionary is very useful and a handy reference for the seed plants of Karnataka.

S.R. Yadav  
INSA Senior Scientist  
Shivaji University, Kolhapur