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Rediscovery of *Aniseia martinicensis* (Jacq.) Choisy from Orissa

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Abstract

Aniseia martinicensis (Jacq.) Choisy has been relocated on the bank of Ansupa Lake, Cuttack district, Orissa after a lapse of 36 years. Although a number of district floras have been worked out since the first collection was made by Panigrahi, no subsequent collection of the taxon reflects the rarity of the distribution of the species in Orissa. A detailed description together with illustration are provided to facilitate easy identification of this little known species from Orissa.

INTRODUCTION

Aniseia martinicensis (Jacq.) Choisy is the lone representative of the genus in the Old World tropics. The centre of origin of the taxon is the tropics of America and it is pantropic in distribution. Haines (1922) reported this taxon from Bihar (Chotanagpur) on the authority of Prain 1903, but had not seen any specimen from the locality either in CAL or in K. The species was reported from Similipal forest range, Mayurbhanj district, Orissa on the way to Lulung for the first time during 1958 by Mishra *et al.* (1983). Although a number of district floras have been worked out since then (Saxena & Brahmam, 1995), the species was not subsequently collected from any other place in Orissa. The authors while working for flora of Orissa have relocated the taxon after a lapse of 36 years of the previous collection, growing as a meagre population on the bank of the Ansupa, a fresh water lake in Cuttack district. This present collection extends the distribution of the species upto central part of the State, which by itself is very interesting since both the localities are quite isolated by geographical barriers. The sporadic and small population reflects the rarity of the species and perhaps the taxon is under tremendous pressure of depletion.

This species shows considerable variations in leaf shape and in the length of peduncle. The regional floras are found to be incomplete in giving the right circumscription of the taxon; hence, the authors have tried to provide a detailed circumscription of the species found in Orissa, to help subsequent workers to easily determine the identity of the taxon.

Aniseia martinicensis (Jacq.) Choisy Mem. Soc. Phys. Geneve 6 : 483. 1838; Ooststr. in Steenis, Fl. Males. 1.4:435. 1953; Austin in Dassan. & Fosberg, Rev. Handb. Fl. Ceylon. 1 : 291. 1980; Mishra, Dubey & Panig. Indian J. For. 6 : 293. 1983; Nicolson *et al* Regnum. Veget. 119 : 86. 1988.

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Convolvulus martinicensis Jacq. Select. Stirp. Amer. 26.t. 17.1763

Ipomoea uniflora (N.Burm) Roem. & Schult. Syst. Veg. 4 : 247. 1819; C.B. Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. 4: 201.1883; Haines, Bot. Bihar & Orissa 2 : 594 (623). 1922.

Convolvulus uniflorus N. Burm. Fl. Ind. 47. t. 21. f.2.1768.

Aniseia uniflora (N.Burm.) Choisy, Ben-tiru-tali Rheede, Hort. Malab. 11. 111. t. 54. 1692; Mem. Soc. Phys. Geneve 6 : 483. t 2. f 9. 1838; Wight, Icon. t. 850. 1845; Gamble, Fl. Madras 2 : 924(649) 1923.

Type : West Indies, Martinique, 'vicum Roberti' (no specimen found)

Stems weak, herbaceous, twining or prostrate but not rooting at basal parts; glabrescent to glabrous. Leaves alternate, oblong, sparsely hairy on lower surface, veinlets obscure; petioles 1-4 cm long, white pubescent; lamina entire, cuneate-obtuse at base, rounded-retuse at apex, mucronate. Flowers 2-3 cm long, solitary, axillary on a long peduncle; peduncle 4-5 cm long, sparsely white pubescent; bracts 2 x 1 mm long, acute, glabrous inside, white pubescent outside; pedicels ca 1.2 cm, densely hairy, much shorter than the outer sepals. Sepals 5 unequal, reticulately veined, sparsely pubescent, 2 outer sepals foliaceous, 17 x 9 mm, ovate, acute or mucronulate at apex, rounded to slightly acute at base, decurrent on pedicels; third sepal lanceolate, ca 14 mm long, more or less falcate, acuminate apex, slightly decurrent; two inner sepals ca 12 mm long, ovate to lanceolate, acuminate at apex, not decurrent at base. Corolla white, funnel-shaped, ca 27 mm long, limb 5-lobed, white pubescent outside on midribs, glabrous inside; stamens 5, 7-9 mm long, epipetalous, anthers two-lobed, pollens smooth, globose, filaments filiform, hairy at base, carpels 2, ca 15 mm long, glabrous, ovary 2-celled, 2 ovules per locule, style filiform, stigma 2-lobed, globular. Capsules ovoid, 1.2 cm long, glabrous, subtended by enlarged calyx.

Flowering : September-November (*But Panigrahi has seen during February).

Fruiting : November-February

Distribution : Throughout India (Lulung and Ansupa Lake from Orissa), Sri Lanka, Nepal. Pantropic.

Ecology : Usually found in low altitudes (50-90 m), preferably in the moist places along the banks of river or fresh water lake and back waters

Use : So far its use is not reported from India, however, it is used as a vegetable in the Malay peninsula and in Borneo. Cultivated in Sri Lanka as leaf vegetable and grows as a weed in the rice fields.

Rediscovery of *Aniseia martinicensis*

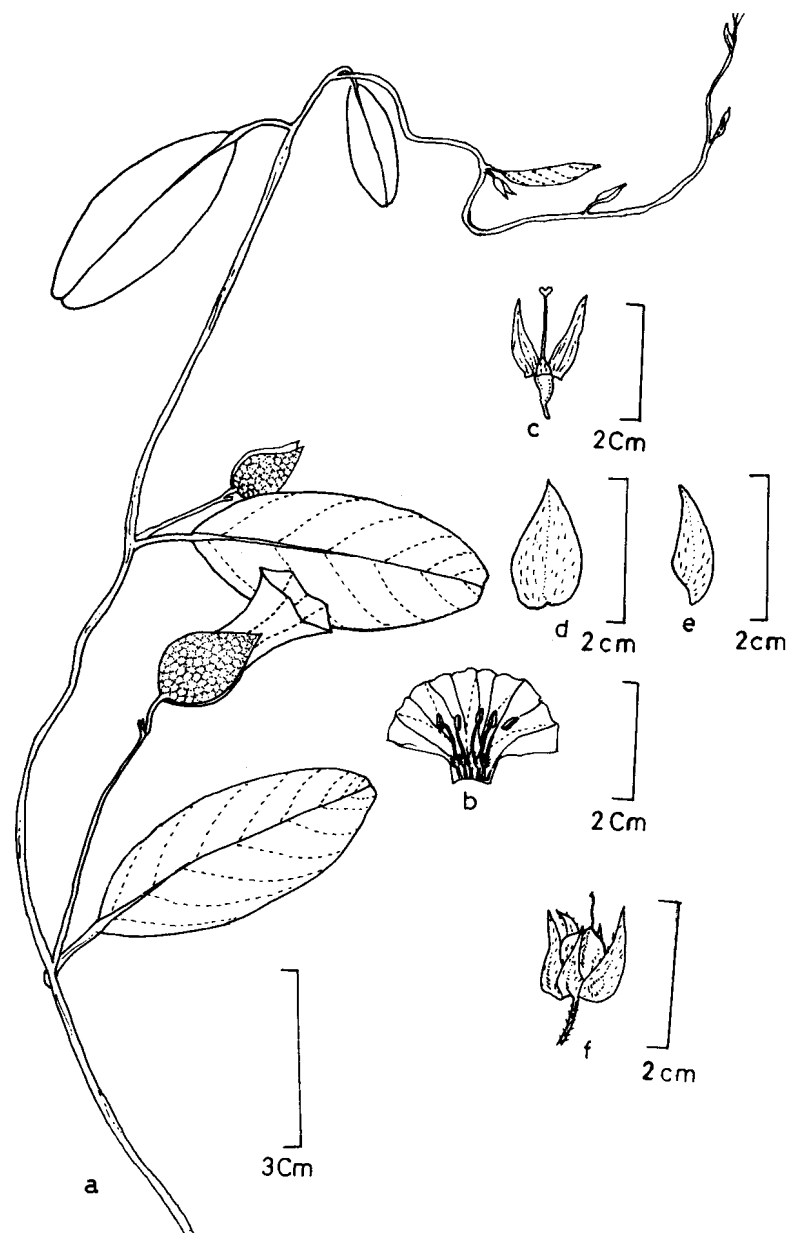


Fig.1. *Aniseia martinicensis* (Jacq.) Choisy : A. Flowering twig; B. Corolla spread open; C. Pistil with inner sepals; D. Outer sepal; E. Third sepal; F. Young capsule with calyx.

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