

Notes on the distribution of *Maesa velutina* Mez (Myrsinaceae) - a rare and endemic plant from India

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While working on the floristics of Kolhapur District during 1999, some specimens of *Maesa* were collected. They were tentatively identified as *M. indica* var. *dubia*. However, on comparison with the herbarium specimens of related species deposited with the Botanical Survey of India, Western Circle, Pune (BSI) (MMS 1267) (Image 1), it became clear, that specimens collected by us differed from *M. indica* var. *dubia* by a number of characters.

The publication by Kumar et al. (2008), wherein the authors have reinvestigated the identity of the species, enabled us to place the specimens collected by us correctly as *M. velutina* Mez.

Earlier, the taxon was known only from three gatherings. Later, two additional populations were located, one in Kerala State and the other in Karnataka State (Kumar et al. 2008). The present report confirms the occurrence of this taxon in Maharashtra State (Image 2).

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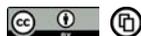
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Specimens examined:
20.iv.1999, Radhanagari,
Kolhapur District, Maharashtra
State, India, coll. Milind M.

Sardesai, specimens are deposited in the Herbarium of the Department of Botany, Shivaji University, Kolhapur (MMS 1267).

Maesa velutina Mez in Engl., Pflanzl. IV, 236: 35. 1902; T. Cooke, Fl. Pres. Bombay 2:142.1958 (Repr.); M.R. Almeida Fl. Maharashtra 3A: 164. 2001; Londhe in N.P. Singh et al. Fl. Maharashtra St., Dicot. 2: 289. 2002; Kumar et al. *Rheedea* 18 (1): 39–42. 2008.

Large shrubs with young branches, ferruginous hairy. Leaves elliptic, margin serrate, densely ferruginous hairy, glabrous above except along the veins, densely pilose beneath. Inflorescence axillary or lateral raceme.



Image 1. Herbarium of *Maesa velutina*



Image 2. Distribution of *Maesa velutina* Mez in Peninsular India

Flowering and Fruiting: December–May

Habitat: It grows at an altitude of 900m altitude along a stream bank in the semievergreen forests of Radhanagari forest range. Common associates include *Boehmeria glomerulifera* Miq., *Callicarpa tomentosa* (L.) Murr., *Elaeocarpus serratus* L., *Euonymus indicus* Heyne ex Wall., *Ficus racemosa* L., *Garcinia talbotii* Raiz. ex Sant., *Glochidion ellipticum* Wight, *Holigarna grahamii* (Wight) Kurz., *Homalium ceylanicum* (Gardn.) Benth., *Hydnocarpus pentandra* (Buch.-Ham.) Oken, *Knema attenuata* (Wall. ex Hook. f. & Thoms.) Warb., *Mackenzia integrifolia* (Dalz.) Bremek., *Meiogyne pannosa* (Dalz.) Sinclair, *Nilgirianthus heyneanus* (Nees) Bremek., *Nothapodytes nimmoniana* (Grah.) Mabb. and *Symplocos cochinchinensis* (Lour.) S. Moore subsp. *laurina*. (Retz.) Nooteb.

Distribution: India (Western Ghats: Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra).

Remarks

Cooke (1901–08) reported two species and a variety of *Maesa*. However, he had doubtfully included *M. velutina*, stating that: “Of this I have seen no specimens; there are none in herbarium kew. According to Mez the plant grows in Bombay Presidency, Dr. Gibson’s

specimens are in Herbarium Leiden.

Almeida (2001) included this taxon for the Flora of Maharashtra based on Cooke’s report. Therefore, the present paper reports the first authentic collection in recent years and confirms the distribution of *M. velutina* in the state of Maharashtra.

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