

A Note on *Bauhinia* S.S and its Allied Genera (Leguminosae: Cercidoideae) in West Bengal

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Abstract: In the present communication, the taxonomic treatment of *Bauhinia* L. s.s. and its allied genera in the recently published second volume of Flora of West Bengal is discussed. Keys to genera and species have been given.

Keywords: *Bauhinia* s.s., *Phanera*, *Piliostigma*, West Bengal, State Flora

1. INTRODUCTION

While referring to the recently published second volume of Flora of West Bengal, it was observed that seven species of *Bauhinia* L. s.s. and two species of *Phanera* Lour. have been reported from the state by Paul (2015).

Following the classification of Sinou *et al.* (2009), Bandyopadhyay (2015) divided the genus *Bauhinia* s.l. in India into three genera namely *Bauhinia* s.s., *Phanera* and *Piliostigma* Hochst. Paul (2015) also treated *Bauhinia* in a strict sense but the segregation of all the species under *Bauhinia* s.s. was not correct. *Bauhinia scandens* L. and *B. semla* Wund. (under *Bauhinia* the correct name of *B. semla* should have been *B. roxburghiana* Voigt; see Bandyopadhyay, 2007) are now placed under *Phanera*. Their currently accepted names are *P. scandens* (L.) Raf. ex Benth. and *P. retusa* Benth., respectively. Similarly, *B. malabarica* Roxb. is now treated under the genus *Piliostigma*, i.e. as *P. malabaricum* (Roxb.) Benth. Presently four species each of *Bauhinia* s.s. and *Phanera* and one in *Piliostigma* are known to occur in the state of West Bengal.

Key to the genera

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1a. Trees or shrubs (rarely semiscandent), without tendrils and nectariferous disc | 2 |
| 1b. Lianas with tendrils, rarely trees without tendrils but with nectariferous disc | Phanera |
| 2a. Calyx splitting to mouth of hypanthium at anthesis | Bauhinia s.s. |
| 2b. Calyx splitting only in the upper part at anthesis | Piliostigma |

Key to the species of *Bauhinia* s.s.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1a. Fertile stamens 10 | 2 |
| 1b. Fertile stamens 5 or 3 | 3 |
| 2a. Leaves do not emit smell of <i>Curry patta</i> [<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L.) Spreng.] when crushed;
flower buds with 5 free puberulous calyx teeth at apex; petals white | B. acuminata L. |
| 2b. Leaves emit smell of <i>Curry patta</i> [<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L.) Spreng.] when crushed; flower
buds without calyx teeth at apex; petals yellow or cream, with or without a dark purple or
maroon blotch at the base of uppermost petal | B. tomentosa L. |
| 3a. Flower buds clavate; fertile stamens 3 | B. purpurea L. |
| 3b. Flower buds fusiform; fertile stamens 5 | B. variegata L. |

Key to the species of *Phanera*

- 1a. Lianas with tendrils 2
1b. Trees without tendrils **P. retusa** Benth.
2b. Calyx closed at apex before anthesis **P. vahlii** (Wight & Arn.) Benth.
2a. Calyx open at apex before anthesis 3
3a. Ovary woolly **P. macrostachya** Benth.
3b. Ovary glabrous **P. scandens** (L.) Raf. ex Benth.

Dr. T.K. Paul (pers. comm.), however, informed me that in his manuscript, he had treated the *Bauhinia* in a broad sense for the Flora but was unaware of the changes made by one of the editors while editing the manuscript.

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