

CHECKLIST OF ORCHIDS FROM A MID ELEVATION EVERGREEN FOREST AT KAKACHI-KODAYAR, KALAKKAD-MUNDANTHURAI TIGER RESERVE, AGASTHYAMALAI, SOUTHERN WESTERN GHATS

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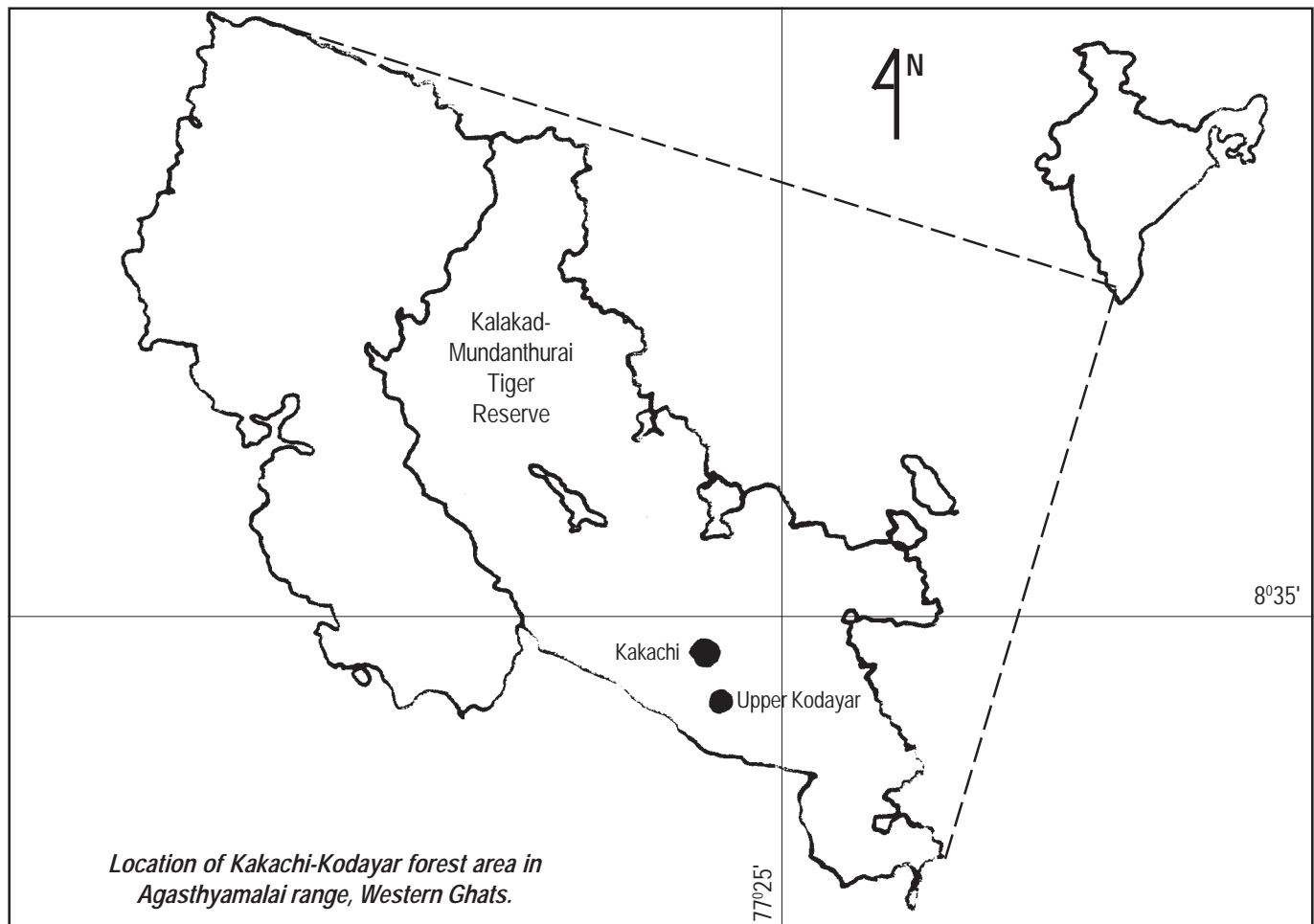
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The forests at Kakachi-Kodayar (77°24'N & 8°32'E, 1200-1550m), in Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, part of Agasthyamalai range in the southern part of the Western Ghats (see map) support one of the species-rich forest site (Ganesh *et al.*, 1996). Though some part of the forest is lost to the dam, plantations, logging and *Ochlandra* spp. (reed bamboo) extraction, it still supports dense contiguous forest of subtropical wet evergreen, subtropical montane and shola forest types surrounded by grasslands.

It is quite significant that there are 55 taxa of orchids found in this small range of 10 km² area. Of these 11 are endemic to southern Western Ghats and 20 to Peninsular Ghats. The orchid flora reported here includes 13 species found common between Sri Lanka and the Western Ghats. Nearly 18 species are found to be rare in this locality, which were sighted occasionally despite the equal effort spent.

Orchids collected were identified with floras such as Fischer (1928), Joseph (1987), Abraham and Vatsala (1981) and Sathish Kumar and Manilal (1994). Herbarium materials in Botanical



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Table 1. Checklist of orchids at mid elevation evergreen forest at Kakachi-Kodayar.

Aenhenrya rotundifolia (Blatt.) Sathish & Rasm. *
Anoectochilus elatus Lindley *
Arundina graminifolia (D. Don) Hochr.
Brachycorythis splendida Summerh. *
Bulbophyllum elegantulum (Rolfe) J.J. Smith. *
Bulbophyllum fischeri Seidenf. *
Bulbophyllum xylophyllum Par. & Reichb.f.
Bulbophyllum sp.
Calanthe masuca (D. Don) Lindley
Cheirostylis parvifolia Lindley #
Chiloschista faciata (F. Muell.) Seidenf. & Ormerod #
Chrysoglossum maculatum (Thwaites) J.D. Hook. #
Coelogyne nervosa A. Rich. *
Cymbidium aloifolium (L.) Sw.
Dendrobium diodon Reichb. f. sub sp. *kodayarensis* Gopalan & Henry *
Dendrobium herbaceum Lindley *
Dendrobium heterocarpum Lindley
Dendrobium heyneanum Lindley *
Dendrobium macrostachyum Lindley #
Dendrobium nutantiflorum Hawkes & Heller #
Dendrobium wightii Hawkes & Heller *
Dendrobium sp.
Didymoplexis pallens Griffith
Disperis neigherrens Wight *
Epipogium roseum (D. Don) Lindley
Eria nana A. Rich. *
Eria pauciflora Wight *
Eria pseudoclavicaulis Blatter & McCann *
Eria reticosa Wight
Gastrochilus acaulis (Lindley) Kuntze #
Habenaria multicaudata Sedgw. *
Habenaria perrottetiana A. Rich. *
Liparis atropurpurea Lindley #
Liparis elliptica Wight
Liparis wightiana Thwaites #
Malaxis acuminata D. Don
Malaxis rheedei Sw.
Nervilia infundibulifolia Blatter & McCann.
Oberonia bicornis Lindley
Oberonia santapau Kapadia *
Oberonia sp.
Pachystoma hirsutum (Joseph & Vajravelu) Sathish & Manilal *
Papilionanthe subulata (J. Konig) Garay
Peristylus aristatus Lindley
Peristylus richardianus Wight
Phreatia elegans Lindley
Porpax jerdoniana (Wight) Rolfe
Robiquetia gracilis (Lindley) Garay #
Robiquetia josephiana Manilal & Sathish *
Seidenfadeniella chrysantha (Alston) Sathish #
Sirhookera lanceolata (Wight) Kuntze #
Tainia bicornis (Lindley) Reichb. f. #
Trichoglotis tenera (Lindley) Schltr. #
Zeuxine longilabris (Lindley) Benth. ex J.D. Hook.

* - Endemic to southern India; # - Common to southern India and Sri Lanka.

Survey of India, Coimbatore (Madras Herbarium) were referred to confirm the identity. Sathish Kumar and Manilal (1994) was followed for nomenclature.

Conclusion

Forest types such as subtropical wet evergreen forest, montane subtropical evergreen forest, and shola forest surrounded by the grassland being contiguous supports a diverse habitat mosaic. This might be the reason for the diverse orchid flora with many endemics in a limited area. Being located in the southern tip of the Indian peninsula the reasons for this forest to support many endemic orchids restricted to southern Western Ghats is because of the wetness for most part of the year due to the South West and North East monsoon rainfall. The forests south of the Palghat gap supports more endemic trees than the rest of the Western Ghats as the area has the shortest dry season.

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