

Extended distribution of endemic species *Argyreia lawii* (Convolvulaceae) from the Western Ghats to the Eastern Ghats ecoregion, India

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Abstract: *Argyreia lawii* C.B.Clarke, an endemic species previously known to have a narrowly restricted distribution within the Western Ghats region, has now been recorded in the Eastern Ghats of India, marking an extended distributional range. During the current study, this species was collected from the Eastern Ghats of Telangana, representing a new record for this ecoregion. Notes on its phenology and distribution status are provided to enhance understanding of this species.

Keywords: Nagarkurnool district, Narrowly endemic, New Record, Telangana

Introduction

Argyreia Lour. (Convolvulaceae) comprises 143 species, and its native range of distribution includes Madagascar, tropical and subtropical Asia (POWO, 2024). In India, the genus is represented by 41 species, 18 of which are endemic (Lawand, 2019; Lawand & Shimpale, 2021). During a recent floristic exploration in the Eastern Ghats of Telangana, we located a unique and interesting population of *Argyreia* growing in the dry deciduous forests of the Achampet forest division in the Nagarkurnool district, Telangana. After a critical study of the specimens, review of the relevant literature (Clarke, 1883; Cooke, 1908; Biju, 1997; Lawand, 2019), and comparison with type specimens (GH, K, P - digital images), the

specimens were identified as *A. lawii* C.B.Clarke. Originally, *A. lawii* was described by Clarke (1883) based on the collections made by J.S. Law from Malabar, Konkan Province, and Baba Budan Hills in Karnataka State. Recently, it was rediscovered from the type location in Karnataka (Baba Budan Hills) and also in Maharashtra (Bhudargad Fort and Patgaon, Kolhapur district) by Lawand *et al.* (2019). With fresh collections and digital images, the understanding and identification of this endemic species have become clearer. As a result, it was recently reported from the Western Ghats part of the Tamil Nadu (Shalini *et al.*, 2018) and Kerala (Rajeswari & Nisha, 2023). Currently, *A. lawii* is considered endemic to the Western Ghats of India, specifically in Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. However, the present collection from the Nagarkurnool district of Telangana, in the Eastern Ghats, along with a review of relevant literature (Gamble, 1922; Pullaiah *et al.*, 2011; Lawand, 2019; Pullaiah & Sadasivaiah, 2024), indicates that this species has not been previously reported from the Eastern Ghats ecoregion.

This new record represents an extended distribution for the species. The collected specimens have been deposited in TBGH and BSID for future reference. A brief description,

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