

***Dobinea* Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don – A new generic record for Meghalaya and Nagaland, India**

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Abstract

Dobinea vulgaris Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don (Anacardiaceae) is reported here for the first time from the States of Meghalaya and Nagaland in India. The genus is an addition to the flora for both the States. A brief description of the species, its rarity status along with line drawings and field-data are provided for its easy identification.

Key words: *Dobinea vulgaris*, Meghalaya, Nagaland, New record.

INTRODUCTION

Genus *Dobinea* Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don (Anacardiaceae) is represented by only two species viz. *D. delavayi* Baillon and *D. vulgaris* Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don in the world, mainly in Eastern Himalayan region to South China (Mabberly 2008). Out of these the former is endemic to China (Tianlu & Barfod 2011) while the later is distributed in Nepal, Bhutan, India (Eastern Himalaya) and China (SE Xizang & NW Yunan). Hara (1966) also recorded its distribution in 'Burma' with doubt.

In India, *Dobinea vulgaris* is reported from Sikkim, Darjeeling, Arunachal Pradesh & Assam at altitudinal ranges between 1,400 to 2,400m (Hara *et al* 1979; Das & Chanda 1987; Das 2004; Grierson & Long 1991; Chandra & Mukherjee 2000). Except this, there is not any report of the genus from any other part of the country.

Recently, during the floristic survey of Nokrek Biosphere Reserve, Meghalaya a very small population of the *Dobinea* is observed near Nokrek peak by the authors. Considering the small population only a single specimen is collected for its correct identification. After herbarium and literature consultation the identity of this specimen was confirmed as *Dobinea vulgaris* Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don. While identifying the species in ASSAM herbarium authors came across herbarium sheets of the species from Arunachal Pradesh (Tirap and Kameng district), Eastern Bhutan and Nepal from where the species is already reported. It is interesting to mention here that some sheets of the species were also seen which were collected long back by N.L. Bor in 1936 and by G.K. Deka in 1937 from Naga Hills, but was left to record in Flora of Assam and subsequent communications. These collections of the *D. vulgaris* from Meghalaya and Nagaland confirm its extended distribution from Eastern Himalayan region to North-east India. This communication adds one genus and a species to the flora the Meghalaya and Nagaland States of India. A detailed taxonomic description of the species and its status in North east India is provided here along with illustration for its easy identification in field.

Dobinea vulgaris Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don, Prodr. Fl. Nepal.: 249. 1825; Hiern in Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 1: 696. 1875; Kanai in Hara, Fl. E. Him. 186. 1966; H. Hara & Press in H. Hara *et al.*, Enum. Flow. Pl. Nepal 2: 100. 1979; Hajra *et al.*, Mat. Fl. Arunachal Pradesh 1: 337. 1996; D. Chandra & Mukh. in N.P. Singh *et al.*, Fl. India 5: 451. 2000. [Fig. -1]

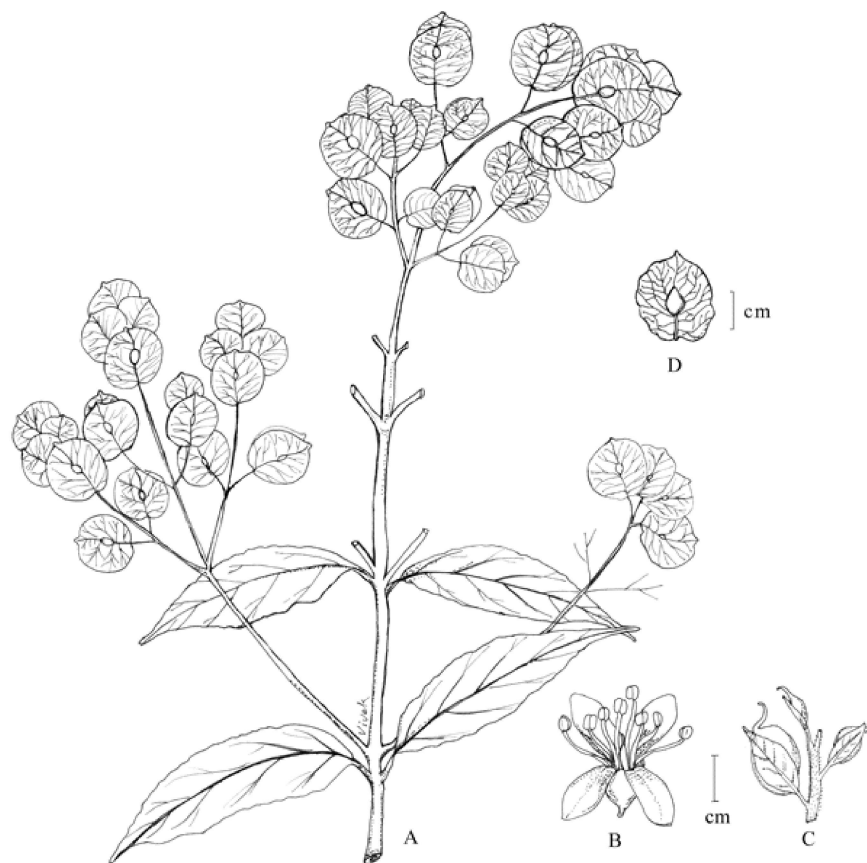


Fig. 1. *Dobinea vulgaris* Buchanon-Hamilton ex D. Don: A. Fruiting branch, B. Male flower, C. Female flower, D. Fruit with bract

Large shrubs, 2 – 3 m tall with pubescent branches. Leaves simple, opposite, exstipulate; petioles 0.5 – 1 cm, minutely pubescent; lamina elliptic to lanceolate, 5 – 12 × 2 – 4 cm, serrate, acute to acuminate, rounded to cuneate at base, thin, glabrescent. Panicles terminal, pyramidal, 12 – 18 cm long. Flowers unisexual, 0.1 – 0.2 cm, across, margin shortly ciliated, pale yellow. Male flowers: subtended by linear bract; calyx campanulate, 4-lobed; petals 4, longer than the calyx; stamens 8, exserted, unequal, alternate ones shorter. Female flowers: subtended by linear bract; calyx and petals lacking; disk annular; ovary ovoid, style longer, recurved, carpels unilocular. Fruits 0.3 cm across, compressed, borne on bracteate pedicels, whitish. Seeds solitary, compressed, exarillate.

Flowering & Fruiting: April – September.

Specimens examined: Meghalaya: 5 km from Nokrek Peak, 1290 m, 02.04.2008, VNS & BS, 118284. Nagaland: Naga hills, August 1936, NL Bor, 6237 (ASSAM); August, 1937, GK Deka 16553 (ASSAM).

Status: Rare. The North-eastern part of India is explored many times since the period of Griffith (1848). Hooker (1872 – 1897), Kanjilal *et al.* (1934 – 1940) have also explored this region very well. Haridasan & Rao (1985) have recently explored the State of Meghalaya but the genus was never reported by any of them. The perusal of literature and our own observation in the field confirm that the species is rare in North-east India.

Distribution: INDIA: Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, West Bengal & Sikkim; NEPAL, BHUTAN & CHINA.

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