



A SHORT NOTE ON NEW DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORD OF *CEROPEGIA MAHABALEI* FROM DHULE DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA.

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ABSTRACT The study was conducted in monsoon of August –November 2024. *Ceropegia* L., comprising over 200 species, is primarily found in tropical and subtropical regions, with its greatest diversity in southeastern Asia, India, Madagascar, tropical Arabia, South Africa, and Kenya (Meve, 2002). In India, the genus includes 53 species, two subspecies, and six varieties, with 41 taxa endemic to the region. Unfortunately, many of these species are under threat (Kambale & Yadav, 2019).

KEYWORDS : *Ceropegia*, Maharashtra, Dhule, new distribution

One notable endemic species is *Ceropegia mahabalei* Hemadri & Ansari, which is rare and primarily found in Maharashtra. First described in 1971 from Ralegaon Shinde and Bhivade Khurd near Junnar (Pune District), it has been frequently collected from these localities by botanists and enthusiasts. Additional sightings have been reported, including Kasara Ghat (Thane District) by Malpure et al. (2006) and Ramshej Fort (Nashik District) by Pethe & Tillu (2016). Mishra & Singh (2001) reported the species in Junnar in Pune, Satara, and Kalsubai Peak in Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra. A new variety of *Ceropegia mahabalei* was described by Rahangdale & Rahangdale (2012), but it has since been merged with *Ceropegia oculata* Hook. as per Kambale & Yadav (2015).

During monsoon of August –November 2024 the botanical exploration were conducted couple of times in the mountain ranges of Mangi –Tungi (Nashik District) and Virkhel village of Sakri (Dhule district), the author collected some specimens of *Ceropegia* genus in flowering stage and confirm later as *Ceropegia mahabalei*. This report shows the extension of the distribution of this endangered species to the Dhule district.

Recently Mukta Bhamare (2019) reported it from Salher and Chinchli ghat. This result shows the distribution of this endangered species towards the boundary of Gujarat state.

RESULTS

Ceropegia mahabalei Hemadri & Ansari is a tuberous herb characterized by its long, linear leaves. This endangered species, endemic to Maharashtra (C Kameswara Rao, B L Geetha, Geetha Suresh 2003) typically grows on grassy slopes of hills. *Ceropegia mahabalei* was found in a small population of fewer than 30 individuals, growing alongside or in the canopy of *Lantana* species. This finding of distribution of *Ceropegia mahabalei* from mountain ranges of Mangi –Tungi (Nashik District) and Virkhel village of Sakri (Dhule district) at the altitude of 926 meter is not only a new report for the district but also the first record of this species in Dhule district.

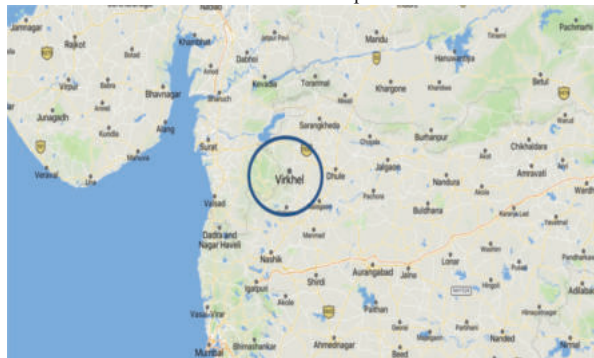


Figure 1 - Distribution map of *Ceropegia mahabalei* Hemadri & Ansari.

DISCUSSION

Ceropegia mahabalei locally known as “Gavati Kharpudi” or “Ulashya” it is an erect herb that reaches heights of 20–65 cm. Its flowers are striking and solitary, with hairy pedicels and calyx. The corolla measures 5.5–10.0 cm in length, featuring an inflated base that narrows at the neck and widens towards the mouth; the interior is glabrous, while the lobes are hairy and connate at the tips, forming a distinctive beaked crown. The corona is biseriolate, with an outer corona of five bidentate glabrous lobes and inner linear, erect lobes.

The fruit consists of a pair of terete, glabrous follicles that are linear and taper towards the end. Flowering occurs from August to September, with fruiting starting in September (Almeida 2001; Singh et al. 2001).



Image-1. *Ceropegia mahabalei* Hemadri & Ansari: Habitat & Flower

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Authors Contribution:

Satish S. Tambe conceptualized the article, Bhushan S. Wagh did the methodology and draft preparation, Akash K. Surywanshi did the formal analysis.

Conflict Of Interest:

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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