

DROSERA BURMANNII: A CARNIVOROUS PLANT SPECIES
FROM EASTERN GHATS OF INDIA

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The eastern Ghats range of southwestern India, in the coastal part of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa state, is an area rich with diverse plants species. This area has a year-round subtropical climate with a temperature range between 15-25°C and heavy monsoonal rainfall.

While I was describing a new species (*Caralluma moorei* Aditya), I found a very red-colored *Drosera burmannii* Vahl, a well-known insectivorous sundew plant. The plants were growing on the eastern side of Panchlingeswar Hills – an area of open valley grassland. They were found in habitat associated with stony, gravel-rich, and very moist reddish alluvial soil (see Fig. 1).

The Panchlingeswar Hills are a part of the Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary in the Balasore [Baleswar in Oriya language] district of Orissa state. Plants from many diverse genera are found here, including *Caralluma moorei*, *Caralluma diffusa*, *Sanseveria* sp., *Bombax malabaricum*, *Gyrocarpus americana*, *Euphorbia nerefolia*, *Ceropegia bulbosa* var. *bulbosa*, many fern species, a few ground orchids, and Liliaceae sp.

At the time, I could not identify the *Drosera* plants, because the species flowers only in January and February, and I was too early. So I visited the area again in January to see if I could find flowering plants. This time I found many plants with bud formation, two near to flowering, and one with a small seed pod. As I waited for a bit of sunshine, the plants showed pinkish flower buds, but did not fully open. I guessed that the plants might be *Drosera burmannii*, a deep red clone found in India. Actually, this species is widely distributed from Australia, Japan, eastern Asia, and also subtropical India. The plants' color depends on sunshine – plants are more greenish under low light.

In cultivation, the plants grow quite well in my cool orchid house (see Fig. 2). I give them a soil mixture of one part sand, one part soil, and one and half part leaf mold with some added old bone meal. The soil is kept moist.



Figure 1: Panchlingeswar Hills, eastern Ghats Ranges.



Figure 2: *Drosera burmannii* plants in cultivation.

References

Jain, S.K., and Sastry, A.R.K. 1980. Threatened Plants of India: A state-of-the-art report. Botanical Survey of India, Howrah. 23 p.