

A parasitic herb on the roots of grass, growing as solitary plant in wet loamy grassland. Plant with a short stem of 7.5 to 15 cm high, reddish, buried in the soil; leaf not present. Scape short slender, one flowered; peduncle with sheathing obtuse bracts at the base; calyx fleshy, red and then yellow-white, loaded with mucilage, tip obtuse, acute or shortly beaked; corolla tube as long as calyx, yellowish, lobes bright violet, crenate and erose; anthers with dorsal fleshy decurved horn; stigma pelted, broadly cordiform.

*Flowering*: April-May.

*Distribution*: Throughout India.

This plant is little known due to its rarity.

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From W. Bengal this collection is the first report of its occurrence in this area. It may also be noted that we could not trace any herbarium specimens of this species from any part of W. Bengal in the herbaria (CAL & BSIS) after a thorough search.

*Specimen examined*: S.N.D. et S.C.R. 3749, Siltosha beat, Jaldapara wild life sanctuary, Jalpaiguri district, 3rd May, 1981.

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### 35. ABNORMAL FLOWERING OF *AGAVE ANGUSTIFOLIA* HAW.

(With a plate)

*Agave angustifolia* Haw. (Agavaceae) — a commonly cultivated plant of the tropics, whose habitat is not known, was found to flower abnormally at Poona, where it is naturalised along the cultivated fields and in wastelands.

In normal cases, the plant bears a basal rosette of numerous large leaves (upto 75.0 x 7.5 cm) on a short, 10-40 cm high, erect or ascending stem. The plant is normally monocarpic and dies after the flowering. At the time of flowering a large cylindrical, bamboo



like peduncle arises from the rosette, which bears flowers on terminal branches. Fruits usually develop *in situ* and form bulbils, which separate away from the parent plant and develop into new plants.

In one of the plants observed many germinated bulbils were seen at the apex of the peduncle (c 2.5 m high) of the parent plant. These bulbils were well established on the parent plant and had developed upto 10 leaves which were upto 15.0 x 5.0 cm in size. These so called secondary plants, which were formed from the bulbils of the parent plant were also in turn found to be flowering. At the time of flowering they formed slender, upto 75.0 cm long panicles. Fruits were also formed as in the normal cases (plate 1). In another plant, some

of these fruits had germinated *in situ* forming bulbils which eventually developed into tertiary plants (plate 1).

This abnormal germination and flowering of the bulbils on the peduncle of the parent plant showed that the parent plant did not die after the flowering but on its peduncle, plants of the next generation are borne which also successfully flowered and produced fruits there.

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### 36. GREGARIOUS FLOWERING OF *CARVIA CALLOSA* BREMEK AND *NILGIRIANTHUS RETICULATUS* BREMEK AT AMBOLI

The BNHS nature camp at Amboli from the 25th of September 1982 to the 28th of September 1982 was well attended by its members. Nestling in the ranges of the Sahyadris, Amboli is a beautiful mountain resort in Sindhudurg district, at an altitude of 700 metres. While trekking through lush green hills and valleys, the members saw many species of birds, butterflies and flowering plants. Here, the end of September is the tail end of the monsoon and we had two clear days, but also two days of intermittant rain.

A trek through the moist evergreen forest at Ramghat on the 25th of September revealed

the gregarious flowering of *Carvia callosa*, Bremek (Vern. *Karvi*). The undergrowth in the region consisted mainly of these plants and most of them were in full bloom with light purple flowers. On the 27th of September, the same phenomenon was observed on Narayangad trail. There were a few patches of plants still in bud, the buds being pinkish in colour. *Karvi* stems are used by the local people for making huts and for fuel. The gregarious flowering of the plant is considered auspicious by some tribes. The honey collected in the forest during such times is known as *Karvi* honey and is sold at a very high price because





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