**IPOMOEA TUBERCULATA KER-GAWL. – NEW TO FLORA OF PAKISTAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Ipomoea tuberculata* Ker-Gawl. (Convolvulaceae) is collected for the first time from Pakistan, from the part of Kirther Range lying along the Hub river.

**Key-words:** Convolvulaceae, *Ipomoea tuberculata*, *Ipomoea cairica*, new record.

The up-till now known distribution of *Ipomoea tuberculata* Ker-Gawl. (Convolvulaceae) was S. W. Africa, S. Africa, southern Rhodesia, Erateria, Ethiopia, extending to Sri Lanka and India (Verdcourt, 1963). In a recent survey of the Hub river vicinity upstream the Hub Dam, specimens of *Ipomoea tuberculata* have been collected for the first time from Pakistan.

The original home of *Ipomoea tuberculata* is not exactly known. Verdcourt (1963) has mentioned the type of this name as “Plant cultivated in England from seed from Calcutta, no specimen known now”. Most probably Calcutta here refers to the botanical garden of Calcutta which housed plant species from different parts of the world, therefore the “seed from Calcutta” may not necessarily mean that the seeds were of Indian origin. Clarke (1885) in the Flora of British India mentioned specimens from Simla, Rohilkund, and Deccan peninsula under the name *Ipomoea dasysperma* Jacq., treating *I. tuberculata* as a synonym. He considered this species as “Probably a cultivated form of *Ipomoea palmata*”. That is, *I. tuberculata* was not known in the wild in India. In Sri Lanka as well, this species has been collected only once (Austin, 1980). Therefore, the pattern of distribution suggests that it is mainly an African species.

The presently collected specimens from Hub river vicinity are certainly wild, found in pristine localities away from human settlements. Though Clarke (1885) considered *I. tuberculata* just a cultivated form of *I. palmata* Forsk. (= *I. cairica* (L.) Sweet), it is clearly a distinct species as treated by Verdcourt (1963) and Austin (1980). *Ipomoea tuberculata* is easily differentiated from *I. cairica* by its fleshy-coriaceous, somewhat triangular sepals with two prominent fleshy horns at the base of each sepal, these characteristics are not present in the sepals of the latter. Besides this, *I. tuberculata* has a distinctly lobed, yellow corolla with violet throat (Fig. 1), while in *I. cairica* the corolla is purple and entire, without any conspicuous lobes.

The presently collected specimens are smaller in all respects as compared to the African material, and the critical evaluation of their taxonomic status is under way.

Fig. 1. *Ipomoea tuberculata*: Close-up of flower,
Specimens examined:

All the above mentioned specimens are deposited in Karachi University Herbarium (KUH).

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REFERENCES


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