

NEPENTHACEAE

The Carnivorous genera included in the CITES Appendices are *Nepenthes*, *Sarracenia* (not found in India) and *Dionaea* (not found in India). The Carnivorous plants are often found growing on poor, nitrogen deficient soils; they obtain the nitrogen they require from the decomposing bodies of their prey. The pitchers of certain species are cut and harvested for the floristry trade (H.N. McGough et al., CITES and Plants: A User's Guide 24. 2004).

***Nepenthes khasiana* Hook. f.**

Common English names : Monkey cups, Pitcher plant.

Vernacular names : Kh.: Ksete-phare, Memang koksi, Tiewrakot.

Trade name : Indian Pitcher plant, Tiew rakot

Distribution : Meghalaya (Khasia & Jaintia hills) - Endemic.

Habitat : This is the only carnivorous plant species found in Meghalaya at an altitude of 1000-1500 m. The plant prefers acidic and nitrogen deficient soil, high rainfall and warm climate. The pitcher traps insects to compensate nitrogen deficiency in the soil.



***Nepenthes khasiana* Hook. f.**

Photo Courtesy: B.K. Sinha

Population status/Cause for RET : Endangered. The major threats are agriculture, deforestation, coal mining, road construction, grazing, land slides and forest fires. It is under cultivation in Botanical Survey of India, Shillong & Yercaud. The Meghalaya State Forest Department (Silviculture Division) has set up *ex-situ* germplasm conservation of the plant at Umian (Barapani), Forest Research Station. Also cultivated in Guwahati University, SFRI, Itanagar.

Description: Shrubs, dioecious, climbing by leaves. Leaves alternate; an expanded lamina with tendril terminated by a pendant, coloured cylindrical pitcher with a recurved fluted rim and an operculum. Inflorescence in

racemes or panicles. Flowers actinomorphic. Tepals 3 – 4, in 2 whorls, nectariferous. Male flowers: stamens 2 – 24, filaments connate, anthers bilocular. Female flowers: carpels 3 – 4, ovary superior, ovules many, style 1, stigma discoid. Fruits elongated, leathery capsule. Seeds numerous, filiform.

Parts used commercially : Leaf, whole plant. The fluid of unopened pitcher are used by Khasi and Garo tribes as eye drops to cure cataract and night blindness, and in treating stomach troubles, diabetes and gynaecological problems. The pitcher with its contents is made into a paste and is applied on affected parts of leprosy patients.

Commercial/Ex-Im data : It is traded mostly in local and regional markets. The pitcher plants are collected from the wild and are sold at the rate of Rs. 40 – 50 per plant in the markets of Shillong and other towns in Meghalaya. Local plant collectors are collecting the pitcher plants and are exporting to other states of India. Further, the pitchers of this plant species are being sold locally at the rate of Rs. 1 per pitcher to Colleges and Universities for classroom studies.

Legal : Listed in Appendix I of CITES. Included in Negative List of Exports and 'Schedule VI' of The Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 of India.

References :

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Walter, K.S. & H.J. Gillett (1998). 1997 IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants. P. 434.